# THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT:

## OR, A TREATISE Of the Tree of Knowledge of *Good and Evill*, of which *Adam* at the first, and as yet all Mankinde do eate death.

*Moreover,*

How at this day it is forbidden to every one as well as to *Adam*; And how *this Tree*, that is, the wisdome of the Serpent planted in *Adam*, is that *great Image*, and that many *headed Beast*, mentioned in *Daniel*, and the *Apocalyps*, whom the whole world doth worship.

LASTLY

*Here is shewed what is the* Tree of Life, *contrary to the wisdome, righteousnesse, and knowledge of all Mankinde: With a description of the Majestie and nature of Gods Word.*

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# CHAPTER I.

## *What is the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill.*

I Will not much contend with them that would have the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill*, according as it is in the Scriptures to be a *Naturall Tree*, which being planted in Paradise, had that nature divinely given unto it, that who should eate thereof, their eyes should be opened to view themselves, and they be made Gods, and so know both Good and Evill: perhaps God would teach *Adam* both inwardly and outwardly, and what he forbad or taught him inwardly in his heart, that he would

propose outwardly to his eyes for greater testimony: but yet I desire of them, that they would grant this unto me, that as the thing was done outwardly, so the same to have happened inwardly in the heart of *Adam*, that there he was tempted by the seed of the Serpent to have the guiding of his owne will and nature, not to be so void of knowledge and action, as to be subordinate unto God. That I should so thinke, two reasons or causes doe especially move me.

The first is, that the *Seed of the Woman* was to breake the head of the seed of the Serpent; but as a naturall and living Serpent, whose head was broken, of that Seed we doe not reade of any: but as even then the Seed of the woman was spiritually in the heart of *Adam*, so in the same manner was the seed of the Serpent, for man at the first was created good, not of God but of nothing,

thing, and for that cauſe doth he turne himſelfe alwayes from God, and bend downwards to his owne nothing and vanitie againe; which nothing I with the ancient Fathers, but eſpecially *Taulerus*, doe judge to be ſinne, Satan, death, and hell; and this perhaps was that devill, inhabiting in *Adam*, as alſo in *Lucifer*.

The other reaſon is this, which the Scripture doth teſtifie of the Citie of God and the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, that Paradiſe to be in us: but God alone and his omnipotent Word is our Paradiſe, the *Tree of Life*, and the Temple wherein wee inhabit, walke, ſerve, pray, &c. as we are on the other part the Temple of God and his Paradiſe. In like manner the *Beaſt* (which even now the whole world both great and ſmall) doe worſhip in their hearts, of which the Scriptures make mention in the *Apocalyps*, as alſo the Tree of knowledge of Good and Evill is

in us, for the exterior world, and whatſoever outwardly is to be ſeene or is done, is onely an accident and a certaine ſignifying figure of the true and interior nature: and there is nothing true in all thoſe things which are ſeene with the eye, that is ſubſtantiall; for it behoveth that the forme of this world periſh, becauſe it is nothing elſe but an imaginary world, and a figure of the right true eternall, and by it ſelfe the conſtant world; therefore it is expedient that all theſe things in their courſe be done over againe, which throughout all the Bible are related outwardly and ſignificantly to have been done, and yet to this day after their manner, the Hiſtorie of the Bible, *Moſes*, and the Prophets, are ſpiritually and truely of force, but all thirgs are brought into the truth by Chriſt, and it is expedient, that all the prophecies, which have been from the beginning

ning of the world, which God hath ſpoken by the mouth of his Saints, he againe reiterated: Therefore that Tree was nothing elſe then the nature, will, knowledge, and life of *Adam*, whereof he ought not to eate. That is not to attribute any part of it to himſelfe: But freely and willingly ſubmit himſelfe to God; and know nothing but what God would know in him; doe nothing but what God would doe in him; ſpeake nothing but what God would ſpeake in him, &c. Whereby without any impediment God might exerciſe his Kingdome, will, nature & power in him, that being void of will, wiſdome, and knowledge, he might have nothing of his owne, or arrogate any thing to himſelfe, this God would, this was pleaſing to him, and thus he commanded. To this opinion the *Germane Diuinitie* aſcents: *Theologia Germanica*, 3470. *cap.* Which ſaith that this tree is nothing

elſe but our owne will and knowledge, of which alone in the earthly Paradiſe of the world of our hearts, we are not to eate, but account it as forbidden, unleſſe we deſire to dye, or eate death from it. And now when *Adam* was fallen, and had eaten of this tree, then was it planted in his heart, and the ſame was derived into all his boughes and fruit, ſo that the ſame caſe, word, precept, and interdict, is common to all his poſteritie, we all have eaten death, whoſoever are in *Adam*, and this uncorrected poyſon have we received from the Serpent, being *evill Egges of an evill Bird.*

Hence may every man eaſily perceive, how each man is the greateſt enemy to himſelfe, and what he ought to eſteeme of himſelfe, his will & underſtanding, wiſdome and knowledge, ſince it is the Counſell, ſeed, wiſdome, knowledge and head of the Serpent, which by Chriſt is

to

to be broken in our hearts: it behoveth that all things (which Circumcision in the old, and Baptisme in the new Covenant doth signifie) which are hereditary and naturall from *Adam* should dye in us: that we should labour to unlearne, and put off all things, as if they were death and the devill; that is our will, wisdome, and righteousnesse, &c. with which as with figleaves *Adam* strove to cover himselfe: for this is sinne, and the sting of sinne and death, that is to eate of this forbidden Tree, and to arrogate any thing to a mans selfe, as his will, nature, and understanding, or himselfe; But alas, alas who knows this, or beleeves this, who abandons or is weary of his own will, understanding, or knowledge, when will men give a farewell to them? Give a *Farewell* say I, why every one delights himselfe in his owne imaginations, & swectly slumbring recreates his soule in his own wis-

dome, knowledge, workes, &c. the Tree is faire to the eye, and pleaſant to the taſt: Here all mankinde as *Adam* himſelfe doe taſte death; But yet no man knowes, no man thinkes of this, but every man judgeth it to be right, and the fleſh eſteemeth it to be the Tree of Life. That is to follow its own pleaſure and opinion of Good, which is falſe: To know much, to finde out much, to learne many ſciences, and finally to become a God; Neither doe any conſider, that this was *Adams* eſtate and morſell, that bitter morſel of death.

How doe we ſpeake and talke of *Adams* miſery, and yet not marke that the ſame is freſh in us; We can talke of his eating, and wonderfully deteſt it, when notwithſtanding we doe the ſame that he did.

O man, who art thou that thus prepareſt a ſtaffe for thine owne ſhoulders, and pronounceſt a Sentence againſt thy ſelfe, while thou con-

condemneſt thy father *Adam*, and yet conſidereſt not that thou thy ſelfe art enſnared in his Net.

Here propound and conſider what our will is, our knowledge is, our wiſdome is, &c. in which we ſo inſolently boaſt our ſelves, yea and by which we imagine and ſuppoſe that we can come unto God, when notwithſtanding it is nothing, nothing elſe but death it ſelfe, and the bitter Fruit of the forbidden Tree.

Is there any amongſt all men who underſtand this? Who can away with this? To deny, put off, fearfull to reſt in their owne will, wiſdome, knowledge, &c. No: doe not moſt chuſe and extoll them as true gold and Eternall Life, when notwithſtanding they are nothing but Eternall death.

CHAP.

## Chap. II.

### *Why the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill, is mortall and forbidden?*

THis may be easily answered by that which hath been before related. God (as right it is) would be in us both Lord and Master; and in the same, will, worke, doe; love, omit, thinke, &c. therefore should we be free from all these things of this kind: so that we should know, or do nothing, but what God himselfe would know and doe in us. Which reason even against its will, doth confesse to be equitie to him that concludes & proves it by truth; for what is more equall then that the *Potter have so full a Dominion over his pots*, that none of them challenge any the least authoritie to themselves; since they were not their owne makers; the same is our condition:

dition: God alone is called the God of underſtanding, knowledge, wiſdome, &c. wherefore he alone will know all things in us, and by conſequence nothing but himſelfe; if therefore any man will taſte of the Forbidden Fruit, and ſo know himſelfe, be made a God, be of himſelfe, ſtand upon his owne bottome, and ſo be his own God; it is neceſſary that together with *Lucifer*, he fall into the hell of death, and like the Dragon be caſt downe from Heaven, becauſe the Fruit of that Forbidden Tree is death. Wherefore God would know onely himſelfe in us, and for that cauſe would have one to know no other ſcience, eſteeming this onely neceſſary to life: and will teach the ſame to us, if ſo be we will obediently attend him: That is, know onely God, praiſe him, pray to, and heare him, which things, I ſay, he himſelfe would worke in the obedient: For this

this cauſe the Wiſe Man ſaith:(*Wiſ. 5.*) *Lord to know thee and underſtand thee, is all righteouſneſſe.* In which he juſtifies many, and by conſequence much more his owne: *Let not the Wiſe man boaſt himſelfe in his wiſdome, nor the ſtrong Man in his ſtrength, but in this let every man boaſt that he knows me,* Iſa. 53. Jer. 9. Which thing God by the mouth of his owne Chriſt, *Joh.* 17. calleth *Eternall Life*; For from this knowledge, roote, and Tree of Life, proceeds all whatſoever can be called good or is truely good; This is the onely and true *Key of David*, which ſo openeth that no man ſhutteth, &c.

CHAP.

## Chap. III.

*Of the abuse of all things, how all things are uncleane to the uncleane flesh: yea those things which in themselves are cleane; and wherefore that curious flesh desireth to know much; and on the contrary, how men ought to know nothing but God, and for God, and use all things in God.*

THat loſt nature of man, who in the Scripture is called the *fleſh*, is an inſtrument ſo impotent to all things, ſo vile, and obſcure, that it knows neither to have, ſpeak or doe any thing, but abuſeth and defileth it by touching, becauſe he converts all things (which are from God, in whom truely they are) to himſelfe as his proper owne: although he ought never to be his own. No not in that which is his owne, but therein to be ſubject to God. Neither ought

ought he to challenge to himſelfe that wiſdome and knowledge that is in him; but to have all things free in his God, as if he himſelfe had them not. But this he doth not; but arrogates himſelfe to himſelfe, and will needs be, have, and know himſelfe, and this is the fall and degeneration of *Adam*, and his poſterity, in, and with all things with them.

Againe, the true and onely uſe with, and in all things, is thus: God would that *Adam* ſhould know nothing but what he would know in him, ſhould be nothing but what he would be in him; ſhould doe nothing but what he would doe in him; ſhould have nothing but what he would have in him; This would not *Adam*, but all thoſe things he arrogated to himſelfe, as his owne, or rather he himſelfe would be all theſe things; This is the fall of *Adam*, and the abuſe of all things in all things, by all mankinde, to the end of the world. The

The abuſe is, I ſay, to arrogate any thing to mans ſelfe, as his own, and not to poſſeſſe the ſame freely, as though he had them not; but to ſteale and uſe them from God, in and to himſelfe. As for example: if having Money, Wife, Children, knowledge, life it ſelfe, yea my ſelfe, I challenge theſe to my ſelfe as my owne.

But ſince God exacts them, it followes that I would therefore detaine them, and as much as in me is, not yeeld them unto God, but knit my minde unto them, that I may keepe, defend, and never looſe or forſake them, (when notwithſtanding they are Gods and not mine) this is the *fall of Adam*, and his theft, being the abuſe of all things inbred in the fleſh: untill man be tranſlated into a new kinde of eſtate or condition, wherfore it is behoovefull that *we be borne anew*, doe vomit up the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good

Good & Evill: And all theſe things which we having ſtolen from God as theeves, doe challenge to our ſelves, and ſo forgetting them reſtore them againe to God; this truly is the reſurrection and converſion of *Adam*; and by this meanes alone ſhall the *Fall of Adam* be repaired and amended.

Therefore the true and onely uſe of all things, knowne alone to the regenerate and new man is this: That I be altogether free from all things, and alone ſubject to God: and being void of name, will, and knowledge, &c. remaine nothing in my ſelfe, neither vindicate, deliver, or claime any thing to my ſelfe (becauſe whatſoever I have, am, know, doe, &c. all are of God,) no more then the Cow doth for her milke, the Tree for it fruit, the Bird for its ſong; but wholy referring all things to God, and have, know, doe, love, and be nothing but in him; Thus the redeemed,

redeemed, free, and perfect Christians, have, know, doe, &c. all things they poſſeſſe, wife, children, life, knowledge, wiſdome, ſubſtance, &c. yea and themſelves altogether freely in the Lord: neither doe they attribute any thing to themſelves; even as if they were nothing, had nothing, knew nothing; for they know that God it is, who is, hath, knowes, and doth all thoſe things which they are, know, or doe; ſo the Chriſtian hath his wife in the Lord, that is, doth not challenge her to himſelfe as his owne, but freely deſigneth her to God, whoſe ſhe is, and from whom ſhee is lent unto him, whom he is willing to reſtore whenſoever it ſhall pleaſe God to require her, and as he never challengeth her to himſelfe as his own, even ſo he ever enjoyes her in God, and in, and for God, loves her; This *Paul* and *David* cals it, to ſing, rejoyce, marry, & have in the Lord: that

that is, to reduce all things unto God, in him, know, love, have, be, doe all things, neither detract any thing from God as my proper owne and right.

And whosoever have not thus their knowledge, Wife, Children, and themselves in the Lord, they offend in this; because they love them, it being a carnall love out of God; And so far are *all things uncleane to the uncleane*, that even his prayers are sinne unto him, yea his praises of God, fasts, orations, supplications, God despiseth according to the Prophet: And although he be bountifull to the poore, yet he doth it in vaine. Briefly, what he doth, he doth it in vaine, it is not pleasing but displeasing unto God: Whether he love or hate his Wife, Children, and Neighbours, whether he chide or pray, all things are uncleane unto him, wife, children, feilds, lands, money, povertie, riches,

ches, fame, infamy, life, death, knowledge, learning, yea God himſelfe. And laſtly, he is unfit for any thing that is good. By himſelfe, he is evill, ſinfull, and nothing. And what ſhew of goodneſſe ſoever is in him, it is ſtained by an hypocriticall eye and affection; Therefore its no matter what he hath, knoweth, or doth, he is a Veſſell of no price, an evill Tree, unprofitable for any good worke, ſince both his mind and conſcience is depraved.

Therefore before all things it is neceſſary, that with *Nicodemus* they be *borne againe*, that all things with them may become new unto them, the fleſh muſt be changed into the ſpirit, and ſo ceaſe to be fleſh. For it is ſo impure and every way deſirous of its owne againe, and ſo infected and depraved with the poyſon of ſin, that it draweth all things to it ſelfe, ſeeketh it ſelfe in all things, and arrogateth that to it

ſelfe

selfe as its owne, which it knoweth, loveth, or doth, and hath all things under a false pretence, and out of a love to it selfe. Neither doth it love any thing but what is pleasant and profitable for it selfe. But a Christian loveth an unprofitable, sicke, and loathsome Wife for God, and hath her not for his pleasure or profit onely, but for Gods will and pleasure.

The naturall and fleshly man doth nothing but out of a love to himselfe, and whatsoever he doth, he hath an eye & reflecteth upon himselfe, and in what he sees, he can find to delight himselfe in, he is willing to meddle with that.

Hence it is that the house of sorrow, poverty, banishment, troubles, sicknesses and reprehensions, and whatsoever he sees harsh unto him, he hates no lesse then the Devill doth the Crosse of Christ Jesus; But whatsoever is excellent, great, pleasant,

pleasant, beautifull, &c. to this he cleaves as fast as the clay to the wheele; Whereby he may enjoy what he saw and desired in them.

Briefly, he doth nothing but out of a love to himselfe, and in what he doth, he challengeth the chiefe part to himselfe; I say, that in all his actions both with God and Man, he respects nothing but his owne profit and pleasure, which if he be deprived off, he looseth his chearfulnesse and alacrity of spirit, and becomes sorrowfull, and desists to worke any further, what therefore can be done by such a man as this, but what is uncleane?

But the regenerate man being borne of God, doth quite contrary in all his actions, he is desirous of the common profit, being altogether so affected & disposed as God his Father; He doth nothing but most freely subjected unto God, suffreth him to doe and care for all things

things in him ; ſo that it followes that in this man is the meere nature and worke of God ; and he or rather God in him repaires to the humble, poore, ſicke, and to thoſe that are in the houſe of ſorrow, to helpe and comfort them : by whatſoever God hath either given him, or doth worke in him, as his ſubſtance, milke, and conſolation, and in all thoſe things he lookes upon no other thing but onely God; who rather in him onely lookes upon himſelfe ; Neither is it the Man, but God in the Man, who communicateth to other neceſſities, loves, prayes, heares, worſhips, honours, wills, and poſſeſſeth.

Thirdly, *Adam* would know, and therefore labours for much knowledge, and ſo *Eates of the forbidden Fruit*, that he may live and become a great one , *even God* ; and for this onely end the whole World now adayes applies it ſelfe to all ſtudies ; becauſe

becauſe it deſires not to dye in obſcuritie and oblivion, but to live and flouriſh, not in the lower degrees of eſtimation, but in the chiefeſt ſeate of reputation and honour, and with all to know all things that poſſible it can, that ſo it may be made famous, and thereby be glorified and delighted therein; wherefore every day he works more and more to encreaſe his knowledge, by which he may be more & more eminent, greater, and more like unto God; that if it were poſſible to know more then God, that with *Lucifer* he might be equall with him; But that this ambition was the fall of *Lucifer*, no man will conſider; but every man in thoſe proſecutions, diſputations, and ſtudies, for knowledg ſeeketh for life, when indeed there is in them nothing but bitter death; which both in *Lucifer*, as alſo in *Adam* moſt manifeſtly doth appeare.

Truely, it is a wonder that of this *forbidden Tree of Death*, every man ſhould be ſo much deſirous to eate; Gods will is that we know nothing, but what he will know, write, and teach in us; and that being void of all knowledge, prudence and wiſedome in our ſelves, we become fooles, we remaine under him as fooles and babes; but we buſie our ſelves about the obtaining of many thouſands of Sciences, and treaſure them up unto our ſelves, as if in them our life conſiſted, that like to God we are ignorant of nothing, and all fleſh deſireth rather to be like unto God, then to Chriſt.

But on the contrary, Gods will it is, that before this be, we as Chriſt was, be deprived of every thing that is our own, and be wholly ſubject unto him: Have, know, doe, love, be nothing, but what God hath, knowes, doth, loveth, is in us. For by this privation and denyall wil

will God draw us unto himſelfe, make us like God, and teach all men wiſdome in him, & not out of themſelves.

Therefore the knowledge of Chriſt in Men is quite contrary unto this; For he hath known nothing, doth, or wills to know nothing, but only God, this is his rejoycing, for this onely cauſe doth he learne ſciences, or rather doth God in him; And to this with all his endeavour & ſtrength doth he apply himſelfe: that as in *Adam* he was made ſomething, even ſo in Chriſt and with Chriſt, he may be brought to nothing againe; and all his knowledge and ſciences, even as it were fooliſhneſſe and deadly poyſon, he may vomit up againe, and eſteeme as nothing; that he may wipe out of the tables of his heart all humane arrogancy, having action, knowledge, and ſcience: to the end that nothing may remaine there, but onely that

which God teacheth, and by hi
owne finger writeth.

Briefly, a true Christian is a *cer*
*tain bare naked thing, who with* So
crates *knowes nothing but this, that h*
*knowes nothing*; *In these blessed an*
*unknowing fooles, God will know a*
*things*, if so it be, man know how t
emptie himselfe, and to cast awa
the baseneſſe of his old ragges; Bu
the flesh for this onely cause doth
learne that it may be something, o
rather be all things, know, have
and doe all things; whereas the spi
rituall man learnes onely for thi
cause, that before God he may b
made nothing to himselfe and al
other creatures whatsoever, tha
thereby God may be all things i
him: know, have, doe, love, an
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But every *fleshly minded man*, who belongs to the Kingdome of Satan, & lyes captivated under his power, thinkes farre otherwise; and defendeth quite contrary; and therefore is in the sight of God fooliſhneſſe, wickedneſſe, ſinne, and Satan; From whence it is that he eſteemeth their wiſdome to be fooliſhnes, their life to be death, and righteouſnes ſinne, accounting their love no better then hatred.

Fourthly, the naturall man hath many goods, wife, children, life, riches, knowledge, wiſdome, will, glory, honour, name, and all things as his own proper; theſe he arrogates to himſelfe, to theſe he applies his minde; theſe are pleaſant, profitable, and deare unto him. But if they be taken from him, and God exact his owne, then the theefe appeares, neither will he willingly ſend them againe: he turnes himſelfe, and ſeeketh for all ſafeguards

and wayes of eſcape, and meanes whereby he may retaine them ſtill, and award God the proper owner of them, who now exacts them of him: the whole World lyes ſicke in this miſery, and thoſe things that are Gods, are abuſed by men. And what is common to all, or rather accommodated from God, he labours as much as in him lyes to make it his owne, and whenſoever he is to reſtore it againe, he doth it very unwillingly.

But if it be ſo, that that which he hath ſtolen from God, is now no longer profitable or delightfull unto him, he then ſurrenders it of his owne accord. And if it ſo be, God giveth it againe into his owne boſome, and if it be Gods will, he ſhall retaine it longer, yet will he not retaine it, if he be able to reſiſt it by compulſion; if he have it, it is with great reſiſtance, ſo that before God he rather wilfull caſts them away, then retaines them. So

So is it that the fleſh, which hath all things out of God, offends in all; and becauſe it apprehends all things out of God, it neceſſarily followes, that although it have all things, yet hath it nothing. For what can it have who wanteth God, the eſſence of all things, and in whom all things ſubſiſt: Surely they can be no other then like *Tantilus Sicicus*, and *Medeas*. Againe, what can he want who hath God, and in him all things, ſince that God is all in all.

Hence it is, that oftentimes thoſe that ſeeme to have all things, have truely nothing, and thoſe that have nothing, may truely be ſaid to have all things.

On the contrary, the *new Man* hath nothing but only God, wherein he can glory; neither doth he any way claime any thing to himſelfe but God; As for that which God gives him, he uſeth it for Gods ſake as his gift and reward, ready to ren-

der it every moment, as it ſhall pleaſe God to exact it; For he can willingly reſtore that which he did never claime as his owne, but as God did give, or rather lend it unto him; ſo that he willingly permits God at his pleaſure to aſſume it from him. Briefly, he uſeth all things as the traveller doth his Inne, or a friend money committed to his cuſtody, ready every houre to reſtore it backe.

This *Paul* termes ſo to have any thing as not to have it, or as though thou hadſt it not: (which in the eyes of the World is accounted meere folly) that is, that thou arrogate nothing unto thy ſelfe; offend in nothing willingly, forſake all things, and with God (as a true wife with her husband have all things common) Wife, Children, Money, life, and all things elſe he loveth in God, and for God; and therefore keeps them, loves them, hath them, nd takes them as lent from God;

ready

ready to yeeld them to God againe, whenſoever he requires them; all the gifts of God, as wife, children, and all other things he loveth onely for the givers ſake, and the giver above all his gifts; and although ſome things are contrary to his nature, as the Croſſe, death, exile, &c. yet he loveth all things alike, and this it is to have, know, love, and marry in the Lord.

But the world and worldly-minded-men, are carried headlong unto the gifts of God, as the Sow unto the Dunghill; Never doe they any whit reſpect the giver but the gift; with the which they commit adultery, challenging by right unto thēſelves; and ſo long as it is either pleaſant or profitable unto them, ſo long they dearely eſteeme it: and willingly will not permit God to have it againe; whatſoever is contrary unto them therein, that they unwillingly ſuffer, though it come

by divine providence unto them; for incontinently they looke about them which way they may pull their neckes out of the yoake: and therefore whatſoever they undertake, doe, ſpeake, &c. that they altogether abuſe; and in the abuſe it is altogether unfit for any good: untill they ceaſe to be that which they are, and being tranſlated into Chriſt, become in him new creatures.

Here it will availe nothing to patch up with God, for if thou ſtop one hole, or fill up one creviſt, another will preſently be made; therefore it is neceſſary that men be born againe, and altogether forget this Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill. And briefly, be quite contrary to what he is or hath beene. He is fleſh, borne of fleſh unto death, and therefore it is behoovefull, that he be made ſpirit, born of ſpirit unto life. Which before he be all

things are uncleane unto him; as he is himſelfe, although all things in themſelves are very good; yet are they perverſe and evill unto him; as all things ſeeme blew to him that lookes upon them through a blew perſpective: all things degenerates into the nature of the poſſeſſor, and therefore all things by *Adam* are made vanitie, although by themſelves (as ever they have been) they are good: For all food is ſavoury, according to the pallet and temperature that receives it: even ſo is every thing according as he that poſſeſſeth and hath it, is cleane to the cleane, uncleane to the uncleane; it cannot be otherwiſe but that all things be unjuſtly done, loved, prayed for, knowne, and retained; which an unjuſt man doth love, pray for, know, and retaine, as the very words themſelves declare; For how can it be that a wicked man can doe any thing juſtly, a fooliſh man ſpeake a-

ny

thing wiſely, an uncleane man any thing purely, a lying man ſpeake any thing truely.

Fifthly, the *naturall man*, as before hath been ſaid, is *Fleſh*, borne of the fleſh, altogether of an unclean nature, perverſe, and adulterous, the ſervant of Satan, ſprong of the *Seede of the Serpent*, ſeduced and turned away by his word, and the tree of knowledge; and ſo infected with poyſon, that betwixt *Lucifer* and *Adam* there is no difference: for as all true Chriſtians are of Chriſt the ſonnes of God, gods and God himſelfe, ſo are all the ſonnes of the Devill, the Devill; being of the ſame kindred and of-ſpring, appertaining to the ſame Kingdome and Covenant, as Princes and Subjects to the ſame, being all in the ſame eſtate of condemnation, neither is there any remedy to prevent this jayle; but that a man *put off the old man*, ſo as he be no longer man, but a new of-

ſpring

ſpring and creature borne of God. Hence we may eaſily gather, what is the naturall prudence, juſtice, and knowledge of man, to wit, fooliſhneſſe, ſinne, and enmitie unto God, becauſe that all fleſh is an enemy unto God, friends unto Satan, and altogether of the ſame wit, nature, will, and birth, and as it were his fleſh and bloud; In ſo much as he is nothing but an enemy unto God; can perceive nothing that is divine; would be nothing but without God or rather his owne God.

Attributing all that is good to himſelfe, as *Adam* and *Lucifer* did, the Father of the fleſh: theſe are the Fruits of the forbidden Tree.

But the Chriſtian is borne of God, is a ſpirit and life, altogether of a divine nature, and nothing elſe but the Image of God; or if you will a viſible and corporall God; who being made one with God, is of the ſame nature: rich in love, deſirous

of

of the common profit; attributing nothing to himſelfe; like to God; free, ſtrong, void of proprietie, ambition, and anger.

Briefly, or in a word, whatſoever can be ſaid or may be ſaid of God, may in its kinde be ſaid of the true Chriſtian, ſince now it is not, he that lives but Chriſt lives in him: Not now he is any thing, but God is all things in him: that is, whatſoever he ſpeaks, teacheth, hath, wils, &c. and although they unwillingly carry the old man about them, yet never doe they live unto him, but alwayes contrary, earneſtly endevouring themſelves againſt him, untill they have quite put him out.

Therefore to conclude this Chapter, the true uſe of all things is knowne onely to the ſincere Chriſtians, and the abuſe to the naturall man: Not yet juſtified, living in himſelfe: who can neither uſe, ſpeak, teach, doe, love, know, have, or not

have

have any thing truely; But with all hath a defiled, both conſcience and minde.

Hence it is that he is altogether unfit for any good worke, like a black Collier; and in all his actions like a ſtage-player, fooliſh, blinde, dumb, deafe, abſcene, and wicked. In a word, whatſoever evill man hath, or title can be invented, it is proper unto him, untill he returne from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill; unto the Tree of Life, and eating thereof, and he be delivered from the Kingdome of Darkneſſe into the Kingdome of Light: Otherwiſe the fleſh doth alwayes retaine its proper nature, and hath in all things a falſe and ungodly cauſe and end, for which it doth every thing that it doth. In a word, he altogether aimes at himſelfe, yea under a pretence of God; although he thinke himſelfe to know, love, and deſire God onely for God, without

without any respect had to himselfe. No man hath yet truely learned to know himselfe, the flesh being so cunning and craftie to excuse it selfe, no man knowes whether or no he sinnes in all his workes, so unsearchable is the craftinesse of the heart; yea no man truely understands, that in all his workes, as in his loving, doing, speaking, knowing, praying, giving, willing, having, possessing, &c. he mortally sinnes, untill he be redeemed, and pulled out of the dregs of *Adam*, and translated into Christ, he become a new Creature; Of which things reade *Paul & Bochius, de consolatione Philosophiæ*, the third Booke and the tenth proose: How we must live unto God, and so be made blessed in him.

CHAP.

## Chap. IIII.

*How Man being of God could sin; and what it was that moved him to sin.*

*Adam* was not taken out of God, or made of a Spirit, but of nothing of the Earth; if he had been taken out of God, he could never have fallen by sin; as *those that are born of God cannot sin: Joh.* 3. but God created him of nothing, and then left him to himself and his own arbitrament whether he could return to his own nothing again, or according to the order of his kind be drawn unto God. Sin in Man and in the Devill is nothing else but that they do avert themselves from the condition of their creation, and that which they are unto their vanity and nothing again; the *essence of Man and Satan* is very good, but this is their nature acquired in their fall,

fall, that they ſtrive to be not that which they are, to wit, nothing, but that which they are not, and ſo do turn themſelves from God; As if it ſo were, that that nothing of theirs were ſomething in it ſelf.

This is ſin, this is that devill in all our hearts, which ſtirreth up all ſin in us: For as ſoon as *Adam* by the inſtinct of the Serpent fell away from God, and returned unto his nothing again, he was indeed made nothing: which thing Satan, who before had fallen into his nothing, did ſpin and weave into the heart of *Adam*, by the externall object of the tree; and he made the fruit of the tree ſo pleaſant to behold, that no ſooner they beheld it, but they were inflamed with a deſire to eat of that fruit; For which cauſe it is written (*Jer.9.*) that death enters in by the windows, that is by the ſight of the eyes.

And this moved the Schoolmen to

to define ſin to be nothing, that is, no creature of God: Neither that death which it produced: both which came into the world by the malice of Satan; and for the ſame cauſe ſin brought man back again into his firſt nothing; wherefore the Devill and *Adam* are run out of the ſight of God; He not acknowledging them for his own: neither having any commerce or ſociety with them: So long as they do not acknowledge their vanity; therefore ſince man by ſin is made nothing before God; and yet will not acknowledge himſelf to be nothing, but even then eſteeme himſelf to be ſomething, it is neceſſary that ſo long he be expelled out of the preſence of God, till he be made nothing in his own heart: then doth God love his hand, and creates him againe of nothing: For God knows not how to create any thing of ſomething, but of nothing, for

that

that is his nature: He that yet is not nothing, he cannot hope that he shall be something; wherefore behave thy self to Godward quietly, like a liveleſſe trunk, as thou didſt in thy creation: Suffer God to do; Faſt, Feaſt, and Reſt, and do thou nothing at all; leſt it happen that thou be taken with a deſire of the forbidden tree, or any other thing; or eſteem thy ſelf to be ſomething according as the Law commands, yet doth it not ceaſe to curſe and condemne us, untill it hath brought us unto that ſpirituall Sabbath; that ſo forſaken in our ſelves, we do no more work to our new birth then we did to our firſt creation, but onely ſuffer; So that our actions are onely to do nothing, and be like a ſtone or trunk; For this deſire to be ſomething is alwayes that which brings to nothing.

CHAP.

## Chap. V.

*Wherefore the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evill was created, then forbidden to* Adam, *and now to us, ſince God knew that both he and we ſhould eat death from the ſame, and what is that Tree.*

WHerefore was *Adam* and *Eve* forbidden this Tree, ſeeing to know Evil is not Evil. If *Adam* had not known good in himſelf, God had been alone good in him, and he had not arrogated any thing to himſelf, but had been as free from pride therein, as a bird is in her ſong, an horſe in his ſtrength, a Cow in her milk, and a Tree in its fruit; but aſſoon as he knew good, and conſidered it what it was; as a beautifull woman doth her beauty, he arrogated it to himſelf, and therein became a theef unto God.

This

This God foreknew, and therefore was unwilling that *Adam* ſhould know good, that ſo he might walk in his innocencie, and be ignorant both of Good and Evill: For this cauſe God ſaid unto him, thou ſhalt not eat of it, as if he had ſaid beware, leſt thou thy ſelf deſire to know what is Good or Evil; but ſuffer me to be all things, and be thou quiet in all things, that that good which I am, and deſire to work alone, I may work it in thee, to my own praiſe in thee, according as I do it in the reſt of the creatures; And thus he was forbidden to know Evil, for God knew, that as ſoon as *Adam* had ſmelt what Evill was, it being of its own nature, like to him nothing, would be pleaſing to him, and ſo it would come to paſſe that he would deſire and affect the ſame.

Beſides this, another evill hath riſen from hence, that that evill which

which man according to his nature delighted to do, he denieth that he hath done it. Thus pulling his own neck out of the yoke, he accuſeth the Serpent that it was done by it.

Again, the good which God doth in him, and which is not his own, he falſly contendeth that he hath done it himſelf, being deceived with a preſumptuous opinion of his own power and ſtrength; this being the perverſe eſtate and condition into which *Adam* did fall willingly; therfore after that *Adam* was fallen into this perverſe wiſdom, by eating of the forbidden Fruit, and his own arrogancie, he was ſo depraved, that whatſoever he thinks, ſpeaks, or doth, is diſpleaſing unto God; and we all in him have eaten death, and fallen into the ſame eſtate and condition; but after we are raiſed from death, and redeemed from it again, by means of Chriſt, there is the ſame reaſon that the Tree of knowledge

knowledge of Good and Evill, ſhould be alſo forbidden us, leſt afterward we fall into the ſame eſtate again: wherefore the next way of comming unto God is this: that now *Adam* with all his children abſtain from this tree, that is, deny it, vomit up the *Forbidden Fruit*, and repent himſelf of his wit, as if it were fooliſhneſſe.

But when we eat of the Forbidden Fruit or Tree, God forgives us, but upon this condition, that for ever afterward we faſt, and alwayes repent our ſelves of our firſt eating.

This tree is planted in every one of our hearts, and is nothing elſe but our own wit, reaſon, fleſh, knowledge, and will, to which as long as we adhere, and are not made fooliſh in our ſelves, and as little children, we can have no pardon from God; wherefore we muſt either abſtain from this wiſdom, and become little

little children again, or elſe want God; and that prohibition of God, eat not of the tree: if thou do thou ſhalt die; is the ſame with that ſaying of Chriſt, except ye renounce your ſelves, and hate your own life, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God; For what was ſpoken unto *Adam*, the ſame alſo was ſaid unto us; neither is our eſtate to be amended any other wayes then that of *Adams*; the hearts of all are like to a veſſell which ſmels of that matter and meat which *Adam* did firſt power into it.

Therfore as *Adam* declined from God and inclined towards himſelf, and made himſelf as it were a wiſe deaſter, and admired himſelf like a little God, the ſame is alſo freſh in every carnall heart.

Now therefore, we muſt labour as it were to go backward, and that inbred wit of *Adams* is to be rejected, and eſteemed of us no other-

wiſe then fooliſhneſſe.

Here many things are to be unlearned, and this we are to learn and know, that all our conceit and opinion of wit is fooliſhneſſe, and that which ſeparates us from God and hinders us ſo that we cannot attain the true wiſdom indeed; and we muſt labour to be freed from the bondage of our ſelves. And to this work we ſhould all apply our ſelves; to wit, quietly to reſt our ſelves, not in knowledge, but in God known; and ſo affect knowledge onely as an Index, which only ſhews and paints out God unto us, and is of God; That is the Fruit of the Tree of Life, and not of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill; to wit, that we permit God to be, know, love, and have all things in us, ſo that he ſpeak, work, know and love in us nothing but himſelf when, where, and wherefore he will.

Full

*Julian th' Apostate* ignorant of this secret, against whom *Cirill* writes, was greatly offended at this: that God would have man to know neither good nor evil, or rather that he would have Man to have, teach, be; and will nothing at all, &c. He (I say) was offended at this.

But if the matter be brought unto the light of truth, we shall find that all this happened because of us: even as a Father forbids and detains a sword from his son, knowing that if he had it, he would hurt himself upon it, or otherwise abuse it; In the same manner God denied unto *Adam*, and also unto us, that tree of Knowledge, for our profit and good; Neither did he envy us therin, but onely did it to prevent the future evill, into which he foresaw we should fall; For he knew that as soon as *Adam*, like God should know Good and Evill, he would challenge the same to himself, and

desire to be his own God; otherwise God had not cared though *Adam* had eaten of that tree for satiety. For assoon as *Adam* had eaten of it, there followed thereupon self-love, and arrogating all things to himselfe, praise, and all other vices.

So God in all his commandments hath respect not so much to himself as to us and our salvation, which not he but we enjoy: as *Job* himself doth manifestly confesse, that God is neither hurt by our sins, nor profited by our righteousnesse, but still remaineth an eternall, perfect, and impassible God, to whom nothing can be added or any thing detracted; though we try, yet can we not make a Heaven, neither put the Sun out of them; nor drie up a Fountain; but all these things remain in the same estate and condition wherein God hath placed them: He that assumes to throw

ſtone againſt Heaven, it will fall upon his own head.

Therefore we can make God neither richer nor poorer, greater nor leſſer, no he is no way advantaged by us, though we all adhere unto him; onely he hath a care on us to help us; we never deſerve to be what we are, therefore we ought to attribute the cauſe of all our good to him onely, and give him the glory: he hath an open hand more readie to give then we are to receive; rich to all thoſe that call upon him; Neither doth he deſire any thing at our hands but onely this: that we quietly receive of him that which he is willingly pleaſed to give, for he that with quietneſſe doth not receive, can have no hope that he ſhal receive; all our wit we ought onely to imploy to this end, to the denying of our ſelves.

This ſhould make us nothing, children, fools, and proſtrate lowe-

at the feet of God.

And to the effecting of this denying of our selves, all our knowledge ought to be directed; but that knowledge onely which proceeds from God, can effect it; it can make a man nothing, a child, a fool, and casts him down at the feet of God; But that knowledge that puffs up a Man, making him great and wise in his own conceit, such being the wisdom of the world, comes not from God, but is rather the Serpents seed and forbidden fruit. Now every one that *eateth of the forbidden Tree*, for no other cause eateth he thereof, but onely that he may obtain a great name, honour, titles, and glory, that he may have preheminence to be counted the light of the World. And by this means he eateth death in stead of life. This the holy Scriptures testifie unto us, for whereas we ought to know and learn nothing, every man learns to know

know and be wiſe in all things.

Now here ſome man might enquire, why therfore did God create the Tree, if he foreknew that both *Adam* and we would eate death thereof, and not rather hinder our ſinne?

I anſwer, that God at the firſt made us of earth, and aſſuredly did know that we would not conſtantly abide in the eſtate of our creation, and yet he ſuffered *Adam* to take his courſe, and make triall of miſerie; that forced through ſorrow and death he might haſte to God again; for ſo it was to be that God would create him again out of ſorrow, and make him again a new, not as before of nothing, but with grace of himſelf; this God foreſaw from all eternitie, and therefore ſuffered his fal, and gave way that man ſhould firſt taſte of the bitterneſſe of death, before that he would give him the ſweetneſſe of eternall life

by which he might know the better what he hath in God, and what that life is compared with death, which before he taſted.

Beſides it was meete that God ſuffered the freedome of ſinne, rather then reſtrained it, as well for many other cauſes as more ſpeciall for this, that otherwiſe it had been coaction and force, and not libertie, and alſo the goodneſſe of God and his mercy, having no other object, could never have been manifeſted in his Creature: Therefore it behoved that things ſhould come thus to paſs by the providence of God, & yeeld without neceſſitie, or any fault in God; Reade *Brentius lib* 4. *& Ambroſ. in Rom.* 9.

CHAP.

## Chap. VI.

*Of the two kinds of Knowledge and Will, and how the one alwayes resists the other.*

THere is nothing under the Sunne but it may be said to be twofold, that is, Just and wicked, Good and Evill. Now just, and also that which is evill and wicked, may in like manner be said to be twofold, the one according to the judgement of God, and the other according to the estimation and opinion of men.

And now seeing God is a spirit, and Men flesh, contrary to the spirit, it followes, that all their judgements, wills, knowledges, and actions, be contrary and repugnant one to the other. Whence it is, what man calleth good, right, sweet, light, life, knowledge, wisdome, justice, &c. God esteems that to be e-

vill, wicked, bitter, darknes, death, fooliſhneſſe, and ſinne, according as the Scriptures teſtifie of God, and of the World.

Therefore there is nothing in the world, but it may be called good or evill, according as the judgements of men are diſpoſed, to whom it is propoſed. What God is unto the world, the ſame is the Devill unto God; and ſo on the contrary; So that nothing can be called Evill, but all things are in their order right and good, and evill and wicked, according as the Touchſtone is, by which they are examined.

If I ſay, that the Word of God is falſe, fooliſhnes & hereſie, the ſame is true in the judgement and opinion of the world; and thus all things are twofold, either good or evill; and good is twofold, as alſo evill: the one truely good or evill in the ſight of God, the other apparantly good or evill in the ſight of Men, or

their

their opinion; so that there is a two-fold fasting, praying, willing, &c. to wit, one that is really good in the sight of God, so as is God himselfe, the author and teacher of all goodnesse; the other in the sight of the world good, but in truth evill and wicked; for what seems holy in the opinion of Men, is prophane in the sight of God.

So there is a twofold knowledge and wit, the one divine of the Tree of Life, the other humane of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill. Humane wisdome is a *Fruit of the forbidden Tree*, and the roote thereof is the Seede of the Serpent, and so is mortall.

These are all the arts which naturall Men have found out, if not without God, yet surely not in God.

Briefly, all wit and arts, which God himselfe doth not plant in the hearts of Men, by the powere of his Spirit and Word, but acquirnd and gotten

gotten outwardly by the industry and helpe of men, are death it selfe, or rather a deaster; if man doe any maner of way trust or hope in them, for they doe make man no more acceptable to God, or any way more righteous before him, then doe his meate, drinke, or cloathes, for all these things are out of man; and a certaine superstition and worshipping of a false God, if thou restest thy selfe in them; thou maist seeme to thy selfe to be nearer unto God, because thou knowst & understandst many things, being more wise and acute then some simple good man, who cares onely to know God; But in very truth, thou art no better then a foole, who art ignorant of these; For by how much thou art wiser then others hereby, by so much thou art worse; For since it is so, that all the knowledg of this world, and all the righteousnes of the flesh is *Deuilish*, according as St. *James* giveth

giveth this and other more opprobrious names unto it.

It followes, that by how much a man offends and growes higher, and increaseth in this wit, by so much is he the worse and more *Deviliſh*, so that a good and simple man, who cares and desires to know nothing but God, if he be compared with him in respect of him, he may seeme to be a Saint of God, and one of those is worth a thousand of others, as holy Scriptures doe testifie, one righteous man is more worth then a thousand wicked men.

The other wisdome, which in the eyes of the world is fooliſhneſſe, is that denying wisdome, the *fruit of the Tree of Life*, which whosoever hath, he shall never die.

This springeth up in man out of the seed of the Woman, and is given and taught of God alone, being in its own nature full of love, working divine solace, and is called in the holy

holy Scriptures the Knowledge of God; becauſe it knoweth nor acknowledgeth nothing but GOD; This teacheth and profeſſeth onely God in the hearts of his ſervants; it arrogateth nothing to it ſelfe, but as it meerely knoweth God; So it renders all it receives to him againe; This renews man, juſtifies him, enlives him, and makes him like unto God, but it is to be found in no mans heart, but onely in his who hath given a farewell to all Earthly pleaſures, arts, will, and wit, becauſe that ſince it is ſo, that theſe two knowledges are ſo contrary one to another, as fire is to water, it cannot be that they ſhould live together in one heart, but the one will expell the other, as the day the night, and the night the day; wherefore all fleſhly knowledge, will, and wit, muſt be quite unlearned, & we muſt become little Children and Fooles againe, according as the holy Scriptures teſtifie

ſtifie unto us, if we would have the true knowledge & wiſdome of God to dwell in our hearts; For God requires a free and empty ſoule, which he would fill with his knowledge and goodneſſe, and imbrace as a *pure and unſpotted Spouſe*, poſſeſſed with no other love but his: He would be the onely Father of the Family, and cannot endure Satan in his Kingdom to be neare unto him, who is altogether light and void of all darkneſſe.

Now this wiſdome being humane, and a Fruit of the forbidden Tree, ſo is it fleſhly puffing up the poſſeſſor of it, ſo as it makes him provide ſelfe-loving, deſirous of his owne profit, bold and wicked.

In a word, it makes a man a *Lucifer*, and ſo contrary and abominable to God, that he cannot or will not flow into his ſoule.

And indeed nothing ſo much hurts man as his own knowledge, wit, and righteouſneſſe, &c. which makes the

Word

Word of the living God to appeare fooliſhneſſe, and God himſelfe, to ſeeme Satan unto him.

Therefore as it hath already been ſaid of wit and knowledge, the ſame may be ſaid of the will of God and man.

The one cannot endure the other; No more then the ſpirit can endure the fleſh, life death, fire water; Therefore the wiſedome of GOD aymes at the utter deſtruction of *Adams* life, nature, will, and wiſdome, labouring to pluck us from the dugs of humane wit, by which wee are nouriſhed.

We muſt therefore learne to forget, and unlearne whatſoever *Adam* knew, or doth know, wils, loves, &c. and all things muſt be made a new in Chriſt, this is the wiſdome of God.

Now let us ſee how farre we are from this, if a man have but onely a thought to learne his way preſently, he thinkes it is well with him, and without

without any repentance he doth sweetly delight himselfe in his own knowledge, art, and will, and all men will be good Christians, and if God will, will compose whole bookes and volumes of Christ, which they neither doe nor have knowne; and by this meanes they doe so wearily imploy and vex their minds through Satans motion, with so many questions, arts, and idle disputations, that scarcely can they have so much time as to think of the knowledg of God; Whereas the true knowledg of God is not learned by prying into, running over, reading or hearing a company of doubtfull questions; as the first *Chap.* of the *Germane Theologia*, and *Taulerus* in many places elegantly doth teach; but by patient and obedient remaining, hearkening and attending to that which God doth worke in us; For he that would be divinely wise, and learne the knowledge of God, its needfull that he

heare

heare and learn the ſame from God himſelfe, he having detained it to himſelfe, ſo that it can by no meanes be taught of man; For as humane arts & ſciences proceede from men, and is their worke; ſo divine ſcience is from God, and is the worke of his onely word.

For as *John Stapitious* ſaith in a little booke of the love of God: that *thoſe things that cannot be knowne but by ſence and experience, neither can they be taught by, or learned from others.* As for Example: No man can teach another to ſee, heare, taſte, and touch; in like manner, & much leſſe can any man teach another, to beleeve, love, hope, repent, ſo that divine Truth and Theologie may rather be ſaid to be experience then Arts: no man can learne of himſelfe the knowledg of God, love of God, Faith, and ſuch like, becauſe the naturall man cannot perceive things divine; nay, the Letter of the Scriptures

tures is not able to doe this: it doth not beget in man any new nature, it but shewes unto him what a one he ought to be, and what he ought to doe; But yet he is not such, neither can they make him such, but rather kill him and slay him by shewing unto him his want and misery.

Therefore is the position true, that faith and love cannot be conceived in the heart of man by the Letter of the word; Otherwise it would be that none should be more faithfull then the Learned; and yet for the most part none are more perverse.

The Letter of the word indeed propoſeth faith unto us, but cannot write it in our hearts, that being the work of the holy Ghost. Therefore that of S. *John* is alwayes true: as the *anoynting teacheth you*; As also this, *he that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me*; For faith and love cometh into no mans heart but his who is indued with the holy Ghost.

Ghoſt. From whoſe inhabiting in our hearts, the light of faith and the knowledge of God deduce their originall; yea love it ſelf is not begot or infuſed in us, but by the holy Ghoſt and an effect of the love of God towards us. Wherefore the concluſion is this: that whom the holy Ghoſt doth not comfort, teach and direct, he cannot be comforted, taught, and directed to the obtaining of Life.

Now all men will ſay and confeſſe, that the world is darkneſſe, mans wiſdom is fooliſhneſſe: yet if ſo be you will indulge nothing unto him, but will tax his will, wit, and deſignes, and ſay they are all fooliſhneſſe and darkneſſe, there is no man will confeſſe it of himſelf, or that it is earthly, but every man will eagerly and earneſtly contend, that his wit is heavenly and divine, eſpecially if it be any way exerciſed about Religion, when in very deed it is nothing

nothing else but the wisdom of the flesh; Yea even that use of the holy Scriptures, which is in the world, which are wrested and turned as every man likes to either hand; neither can these bare words, these words of God, containing in them the knowledge of God, which are common in every mans mouth, profit him any whit: these must be tried according to the will of God, and accordingly used. Otherwise these very words will become a very snare of Satan, and instead of the word of God the word of Satan to him. It is not to say how well the wisdom of the flesh knows how to change it self into each shape, and to flatter it self with a form of the word of God; what cannot men pretend and undertake, to say in the name of God: pretending indeed nothing lesse then the meer honour, praise and righteousnesse of God.

## Chap. VII.

*The Testimony of the Scripture, how we ought to evacuate the seed of the Serpent his counsell and word, and so vomit up the Fruit of the forbidden Tree, and purge the same away as deadly poyson by the Fruit of the Tree of Life.*

THis we oftentimes read, that *our wisdom is foolishnesse with God.* Which form of speech we steal from *Paul*, and bable of it, when indeed we neither know our own nor *Pauls* meaning touching it. No man remembers to renounce and give a farewell to his own wisdom. This forsooth every man thinks is spoken of the wisdom of Turks and Infidels; As for his own wisdom, his reason being corrupted and holding some tenents, gathered from the holy Scriptures (though he

he miserably wrest them to his own turn) yet he thinks his wisdom to be the wisdom of God, and divine.

This every man witnesseth in his own writings, in which for the most part he goes on securely, without any doubting upon the seeming approbation of the Scriptures, to his tenents and opinions; Not considering that this is the very presumption of the Turks and Infidels, with all Sects of false Christians, whom I have known every one hath, or would seem to have the Word of God to be the foundation of their tenets, as the Turks and Jews think at this day, their faith is grounded upon the Word of God.

Hence it comes to passe that every man is deceived in himself, and shut up to himself, from the knowledge of himself. This being it which God foresaw, when he said that the Serpent should bite the heel of the woman, that is, secretly and

and craftily lay ſnares and deceitful gins in the hearts of men.

Therefore know whatſoever naturall man, though wiſe men in the judgement of the world, yea *Adam* with all his of-ſpring the whole nature of men unregenerate knows, ſpeaks, doth, thinks, lives, &c. all this is humane, the wiſdom of reaſon, and the counſell of the fleſh, and the knowledge of that deadly and forbidden Tree: onely that rare *Phenix*, which the Scriptures call the *new man*, or the regenerate that hath the knowledge and wiſdom of God, being taught it from above; All other things are the inventions of men, the wiſdom of the Serpent and *Fruit of the forbidden Tree.*

Now we have ſaid before that the wiſdom of man muſt be forgotten, and we muſt learn to unlearn it: For as the fleſh, even ſo the wit of the fleſh, and the righteouſneſſe thereof

thereof is nothing but fooliſhneſſe and wickednes in the ſight of God. And on the contrary, the wiſdom of God, and his righteouſneſſe, is fooliſhneſſe and wickedneſſe in the ſight of the world and to the fleſh. So that all Arts and Sciences, being onely fleſhly, are altogether vanity, filthineſſe, and a *Fruit of the forbidden Tree*, from the which all men eat death.

It is to no purpoſe for a man in word to deny his own wit, and yet in his heart to extoll the ſame as the wiſdom of God; Or, ſecretly to be elevated therefrom, theſe are but the findings out of the deceived heart of man; outwardly ſugred over by Satan with fair words; And whoſoever reſts and depends upon theſe fair pretences, he builds upon hell, which will all damne. For as meat, cloaths, time, place, perſon, and ſuch like, do make men neither leſſe or more acceptable to God;

So all humane Arts and Sciences do not make the poſſeſſour thereof one jot the better in the ſight of God, if he look at them, and (as *Adam* did) arrogate them to himſelf.

Therefore the moſt learned and wiſe of this world are in this reſpect in no better a condition then the fooliſh Idiot that is.

It is neceſſary therefore that thoſe wiſe men go out of themſelves, and learn to become fools, by going out of their wit, will, knowledge, &c. if they deſire to be indued with *divine knowledge* from above.

Therefore even as the naturall man voluntarily for his own bellies ſake doth torture himſelf day and night, in the finding out of ſo many covetous, curious, and with God unprofitable Arts; Even ſo it is neceſſarie that with the ſame pain and labour he learn to forget and forgo the ſame, and become a Child and

Fool

Fool again; For it is a greater difficulty, and more labour by many degrees to unlearn his fleshly wisdom, and forsake that good he hath got already, then from the beginning to learn it for his profit.

In so much that this is true, who once hath played the Asse, will scarcely learn to leave those doultish tricks.

O how difficult is it to them to become Fools, who have grounded themselves in a presumption of their own wit.

And yet it is necessary that this they must be, or otherwise they shal be nothing lesse then that which they desire to be.

Therefore so requisite is this denial, hatred and forgetfulnesse of himself, that without it no man can be the disciple of Christ; that is, no man can be indued with divine wisdom, unlesse in his affections he hath excluded, and given a farewell

and adew to his own:

Wherefore what wonder is it if the worldly man, who is busied about the things of this life, be altogether ignorant of the knowledge of God; For since he is not obedient to that wisdom that is spirituall, neither can perceive any divine thing, nor receive the spirit of truth; nor for the wisdom of God exchange his own; For he neither cares to nourish that wisdom in his heart, neither desires to learn it, and because he desires it not, he cannot learn it.

And now it is requisite, that as S. *Paul* saies, *If any man will be wise with God, he must be a fool in the world that thereby he may become truly wise.* That is, he must cease to think, as the world doth labour to get a new mind, and deliver over his sences and thoughts to be renewed by God.

The cause of which *Paul* imme-

diate

diately annexeth to the ſame: For *the wiſdom of the world* (ſaith he) *is fooliſhneſſe to God.*

And in his Epiſtle to the *Romanes* he calleth it death and enmity to God. And the ſame *Paul* bids adew to all his own wit which he had learned at the feet of *Gamaliel*, above all his equals and accounts, all his own righteouſneſſe & knowledge as dung and droſſe, in reſpect of the excellencie of the knowledge of Chriſt.

And elſewhere he glories in this that he had learned to unlearn and forget all things, and now deſired to know nothing but Chriſt and him crucified.

In the ſame manner all the Apoſtles become little children again.

Beſides, *Nichodemus*, and all other whoſoever (as Chriſt had ſaid unto them) unleſſe they be changed, and become as little children, they cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.

And a little after; Christ saith, that the kingdom of God is of such little children.

This is the reason why the Scriptures admonish us so often to beware of our own wit, lest we do any thing that seemes good in our own eyes; As also that we resist our own wils, neither that we suffer our selves to be led, and guided by our own affections and desires; and also those that trust in their own hearts and obey their own cogitations, are fooliſh and wicked, also that we seem not wise in our own conceits, nor magnifie our selves, but fear, and in fear and trembling work out our own salvation.

And lastly, that we trust not, nor lean not to our own wit; For what is or can be more wicked then what flesh and blood hath found out.

Truly the flesh cannot of its own nature seek God, and have him in estimation, unlesse it renounce it self,

ſelf, and hate its own life and ſoul; that is, all its own works; though it gloze them over with a pretence of the word, honour and glory of God, for he cannot be beleeved, loved, prayed unto, or found but onely in God.

Therefore all the endeavour, ſtudy, art, and diligence of is altogether void of God, and want his grace and ſpirit. For the word of God requires an humble, ſubmiſſive trembling, and abjected mind; and a ſoul *poore in ſpirit*, and free from the bondage of the creatures; and like to tender wax or clay, pliable in the finger of God to receive the figure and ſtamp of his image imprinted upon it.

To theſe fools and children, ſuch as fear God, and are ſeparated from the Dugges of the World, doth he open his ſecrets, and teach his divine wiſdom and knowledge; if there be any man that fears God, to him the

Lord will ſhew the way that he may chuſe, and he walk in the truth, and his poſterity ſhall inhabite the Land: He ſaies not to the Learned, and to the wiſe of the World; as alſo in another place; the Lord reveals his ſecrets to the righteous. For this cauſe Chriſt the Sonne of God gives thanks to his Father, that he had hidden his ſecrets from the prudent and wiſe of the World, and had revealed unto children and babes; That as we have alreadie ſpoken out of the mouthes of ſucking babes; Such as were *Moſes*, *Jeremiah*, *Amos*, and the Apoſtles, &c. he might ſpeak his praiſe, and extol his kingdom and glory.

Againe, the rich and proud he ſends away empty, and filleth onely the hungry with good things.

Now, no Money-maſter nor rich covetous Churl is more ſwollen up with the vain confidence of his riches; nor any woman more proud of

of her beauty, then these wise men pride and boast themselves of their wisdom and knowledge; perswading themselves that this is the divine wisdom and riches of the soul, which neither theeves can steal, nor rust canker it, nor moath corrupt it, when notwithstanding it is nothing but meer death, foolishnesse, and enmity against God, and in a word, the knowledge of the forbidden Tree.

Therefore the holy Scriptures speak expresly of the wise of the world, these righteous men, famous for their arts, priding themselves in their own hearts, who are arrogant and proud, and are indued with nothing lesse then the Spirit of God, who abides onely in *simple Doves*.

By this it appears that no kind of men are farther from the Kingdom of God, and do lesse square and agree with his Word, and more disagree from his will, then those who

lean and truſt to their own wiſdom, knowledge, reaſon, and will.

Chriſt in the holy Scriptures ſpeaketh not ſo much againſt Publicans and common ſinners as theſe, who being puft up with a conceit of their own righteouſneſſe, reſt upon themſelves with a ſelf pleaſingneſſe; with theſe can Chriſt leaſt accord, and unto them doth ſo often threaten woes in the Scripture, and ſaies that adulterers and Publicanes ſhall enter before them into the kingdom of heaven.

Theſe are thoſe wicked men againſt whom *David* ſo fervently and often prayes, and of whom Chriſt hath ſo little hope, and unto whom he with his Apoſtles and *Stewen* give ſo *cutting language*; who being men of a wicked mind, would ſeem nothing leſſe; But thoſe things which are written concerning wicked men, they ignorantly interpret of others, theſe are ſuch whom the whole

whole world esteeme and accounts to be the shining lights therof; Such were *Nicodemus* and *Paul* before his conversion; these are those who in *David*, *Moses*, *Christs*, and all other times of the Church, have been the *righteous Scribes* and *Pharisees* with the people; who having a shew of pietie, have so lived, as that they were esteemed Patrons and Examples for others to imitate; These righteous men of the world, the Scriptures call wicked; who want nothing but onely this, that they have wicked minds, void of Faith and grace; yet they so cloake their wickednesse with a forme of godlinesse, that they seeme nothing lesse.

Neither thinke we that the times of Christ and *David* were onely pestered with these kinde of people; But we may rather conceive, that if those golden dayes of theirs were full of such, these Iron ages of ours are much more abundant.

All

All times and ages have had their Dissemblers, Pharises, and Scribes, these our last ages since are the worst for seldome comes best things last; For the world as it growes more aged, so it growes more wicked, as both the Scripture and experience doe testifie.

Wherefore it is behoovefull that every man endeavour that he be not of the number of those men, who wresting the word of the Scriptures apply and interpret them on others, as most men doe; but in them behold himselfe as in a glasse, if he desire to see a wicked man, & one that is a capitall enemy against God; And let him but question with his owne conscience, it is as good as ten thousand witnesses, and then he shall easily know what a one he is.

For this cause the Scriptures are so fiery against these godly wisemen of the world; Yea denying all good to them, God in his just judgement striking

ſtriking them with blindneſſe; So that they erre in their owne way, hiding himſelfe and his Word from their underſtanding.

Beſides, the Scriptures doe brand them with a thouſand infamous names; calling them Wolves, a generation of Vipers, Beares, Bulls, Sons of *Beliall*, painted Sepulchres, who are glorious in ſhew in the ſight of men, and ſet forth themſelves as righteous before men by their ſage manners, modeſt habits, and grave geſtures, when in the ſight of God they have their hearts full of nothing but filthines and ſin. Of whom Chriſt ſaith, that unleſſe we be more righteous then they, and exceede them, we ſhall never enter into the Kingdome of God. Nevertheleſſe, they would not ſeeme to be what they are indeed, but cover themſelves with a ſhew of Sanctity. Wherefore it pleaſeth the Spirit of God to checke and rebuke them to the diſcovering.

covering of their ſecret holds, and vizards of their faces; But he who accuſeth himſelfe, and denieth himſelfe before God, and in his preſence ſhall obtaine pardon, as the Scriptures teſtifie; which reprehend thoſe carnall ſpirituall ſpirits, or men, who place their ſtate with God, and will be ignorant of nothing, & they are admoniſhed by God in *Salomons Proverbs*, that they would deſiſt from this their arrogancy; Otherwiſe they ſhall be ſo oppreſſed with the glory & Majeſty of God, that they ſhall not be able to endure & ſtand; But thoſe who humbly ſubmit themſelves, and creep unto God, and willingly know nothing, nor are nothing but what God knowes and is in them, they in not ſeeking finde that which the other ſeeking with great anxietie of minde ſhall never obtaine; For all things are theirs, and they know what God is, hath or knowes, becauſe they in God and God

God in them inhabits and dwels.

Hence it is that *Paul* ſaith, the ſpirituall man ſearcheth all things, yea the ſecret things of God; which is denied to the fooliſh fleſh, according as we may reade in the *Proverbs* and *Eccleſiaſtes*, for in the counſell of the wicked there is no health, no word of God, knowledge, or love.

To the ſame purpoſe is that ſaying of *Salomon*, *God made man at the firſt upright, but he found out to himſelfe many inventions*, many difficulties, many labours, with which he doth weary and vex himſelfe; God that is good, ſimple, and juſt, commandeth him that he ſhould know nothing but him, and follow and be obedient to him as all the reſt of the creatures; He ſhould (I ſay) be ſo obedient to him, as to do, know, will, love, omit, and ſpeake nothing but onely what God doth know, will, love, omit, and ſpeake in him, by which as in all other creatures, ſo in the

the heart of man he might enjoy a plenary Kingdome, and ruling and governing him according to his owne will, neither ſhould man have any title, claime, power, or priviledge over himſelfe.

Satans ſuggeſtion it was that man found out ſo many ambuſhes & curious queſtions, with frivolous difficulties, by which he is degenerated from that ſimplicitie wherein God created him, and ſubordinated him, being tranſported with an ambitious deſire, to become a Lord and God to himſelfe; & ſo remained in the power of his own will; but how juſt this is, let man that hath reaſon judge, that the clay ſhould deſire to know or be any thing contrary or beſides that which the maker thereof would have it, know, or be; ſuch ſimilitudes doth not yet fully expreſſe the matter.

Therefore it happens deſervedly unto us, that our wiſdome, knowledge,

ledge, and will, ſhould bring upon us all puniſhment due unto ſinne, and alſo make us utterly diſquieted, bringing unto us nothing but torture and vexation, ſince beſides and contrary to the will of God wee have deſerved them.

Hence it neceſſarily followeth, that ſin is the puniſhment of it ſelfe, and Fooles are deſtroyed by their owne wiſdome and knowledge.

This is that which *Salomon* experimentally complaines of, when he ſayes: *Where there is much knowledge, there is much vexation; And he that increaſeth learning, ſorrowes.* And theſe wiſe men are Fooles, for whoſoever endevoureth to be wiſe above meaſure, this man ſhall endure griefes and ſorrowes; and by how much they become more wiſe, by ſo much they are more diſquieted. For God will have us to finde reſt in him onely.

Neither muſt we riſe, come, goe, or

or doe any thing before him; For whosoever cometh before him is a theefe, and whosoever speaketh or doth any thing of his owne accord, without him, is a Devill.

Therefore it is that all men are deluded, deceived, and fooled by their own wit; yea even because they professe themselves to be wise, therefore they are fooliſh.

And as God did the Caldean Philosophers, and wise men, so he suffers those to be seduced by their owne knowledge, and to be wearied with their owne inventions, actions, and arts.

Hence it is that Christ would not have his Disciples desire to be esteemed some bodies, or covet that men should call them Masters, Lords, Doctors, or Rabbins, but onely Ministers, Brethren, and Witnesses of him, *Joh.* 15. *Ye are my witnesses.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Of the great Deafter of humane wiſdom and knowledge; and how all men doe kiſſe their owne hand, and all the World adores it ſelfe, and its owne worke; that is, inventions, actions, and deliberations of fleſhly reaſon and wiſdome.*

WHat other thing is the worſhipping of Images, Superſtition, and the Inſtitution of men, then the reaſon, wit, art, invention, and prudence of man?

Therefore the worſhipping of Deafters, is nothing but the adoring of the images of God, not according to his Word, as he doth teach, figure and forme it to us, but according to our owne opinion and ſelfe-conceit.

Againe, what other thing is ſinne then our owne will, wit, and counſell,

ſell, ſowne unto us with the Seeds of the Serpent. Conſider the inſtitutions, practice, and life of all Mankinde, when and how you will, you ſhall finde it nothing elſe then humane wiſdome; here every man would be his owne God, guide, governe, teach, move, revenge, defend, excuſe, and enrich himſelfe; and every man ſets his own braine, will, and reaſon in the place of his God, ſo that ſinne and the fall of *Adam* is nothing elſe but the humane affectation of the art, reaſon, and knowledge of the fleſh; and therefore deſervedly is termed fooliſhneſſe and enmitie, deadly and Deviliſh.

All men ought with Chriſt to become nothing, and with a continuall decreaſe and depreſſion of ſoule, become aſſes, fools and children; but now it is quite contrary: every man labours that he may be wiſe, great, illuſtrious and mightie; ſo many arts and ſciences are learned of men, that they

they may be great, famous, and excellent in the eyes of the world; and may obtaine titles of honour, and names of respect.

Hence it is that young men are inflamed with a desire of glory, and labour not onely to be famous in Schooles, but to be admitted in the Pulpit also; and for that end they seeke out learned Tutors, who may make them expert, quick, and acute in all kinde of Literall deceits and exercises of arts. By which it is as cleare as the Sunne, that the whole world is cõtrary & enmity to God. Here every man kissing his owne hand & adoring his own wit, esteeming it to be his light and his God; Even it that was the onely sinne of *Adam*; and it from whence other sinnes came and have their originall, as *Job* confesseth; (*Job* 33.31.) For to admire and worship himselfe, and to be led by his own will. In a word, to stand on his own bottome, and to

desire

desire to be something of himselfe without God, is that one mortall sinne, which is the fountaine of all other; for the lusts of the flesh, and the wit thereof is very dead.

And man like a Logge, is no better then dead; but while he doth nothing, knows & desires nothing, but keeping a holy Sabbath or rest; dyes wholly unto himself; and being void of will or wit, resignes himselfe over unto God, and permits him to know and doe in him, what, when, and how he will.

And now the whole world lyes overwhelmed with this sinne; in so much that it doth no other but adore the worke of its owne hand, that is, its owne invention, counsels, comments, and wisdome. To this purpose all things are directed, intented, and wrested; yea the very Scriptures themselves, the word of God; that it may be agreeable to our corrupt reason, and not hinder the course

course of our carnall and fleshly wit, and knowledge, but all these things must be unlearned and cast away, if we will see God. And therefore the Scriptures urge so oftentimes, that we should become fools, little children, and purge our selves with the *Fruit of the Tree of Life*, that we may vomit up that poysonfull wit and knowledge of the *Forbidden Fruit*.

## Chap. IX.

*That the Tree of the Knowledg of Good and Evill, planted in the heart of* Adam, *is the seed, word, and spirit of the Serpent, and that great Deaster, Antichrist, sinne, death, the Devill, and that Beast, which is mentioned in* Daniel, *and the* Apocalyps, *which is the greatest and commonest Idolatry.*

1. WHat is that Beast of which *Daniel* writeth, which speaketh against the Highest, and slayeth the Saints of God?

2. What

2. What is that Serpent who deceived *Adam* and *Eve?*

3. What is the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill?

4. What is that impudent King and Antichriſt, of whom *Daniel* and *Paul* ſpeaketh, 1 *Theſ.* 2?

5. What is that many headed Monſter, mentioned in the *Apocalyps*, whom the whole World doth worſhip?

6. What is ſinne? What death? What the Devill?

I anſwer: it is every mans owne carnall wit & reaſon, righteouſnes, and the like; For which cauſe *Paul* calleth it death, enmity, and fooliſhneſſe unto God; and S. *James* calls it earthly, humane, and deviliſh, becauſe theſe three are one; For whatſoever is humane, is worldly, and Deviliſh; and whatſoever is Deviliſh, is earthly. For the Devill & Man *Adam* and the Serpent, are ſworne Brethren, yea both one; For the Ser-

pent

pent hath ſo ſhed his wiſdome, and ſained righteouſneſſe into the heart of *Adam*, that the Seed of the Serpent and his word are incorporated and made man, ſo that now the ſame thing may be ſaid of both.

And even as thoſe that are borne of God, and in whom the Word of God is incorporated, are called God or one ſpirit with God: So all men borne of fleſh & bloud, before they be regenerate & planted into Chriſt, may be called Devils; and ſo whatſoever is Earthly, may be ſaid to be Deviliſh, and whatſoever is Deviliſh, may be ſaid to be Earthly.

Againe, what is the *Kalb of Adam*, but onely the wiſdome of the Serpent & Fruit of the forbidden Tree? What is that old Dragon, who aſcends out of hell and with his tayle draws a great part of the Starres of Heaven after him? But onely the wiſdome of the Fleſh, which doth ſtoll it ſelfe againſt God, and de-

fires, to become a God unto it self.

What are the thoughts of the flesh? What is sin? what pride? But the wisdome and fruit of the Forbidden Tree.

What are the Decrees of Men? The works of reason against God? Mens inventions, knowledge, and books? But only the art of the devill, eaten of the Tree.

What is all the worship of Images and all false Religions? as of Jews, Turks, Infidels, and all false Christians. What are all Sacraments, Assemblies, and Ceremonies? But an apple of this Forbidden Tree: which bearing a shew to be of the Tree of Life, offers unto man, pleasant fruit to his eye, that is, reason which whosoever eats, he shall find to be deadly.

No man can fully expresse the idolatry, with which all the corners of the world and hearts of men are stuffed up; and who is it that do

not adore himself, and say to his hand, wisdom, and reason, his art and his knowledge, thou art my God, in thee I trust, in thee I hope. Indeed men say not this with their mouth, but surely in their lives, works, and hearts, they plainly testifie as much.

Hence all men deny that there is a God, & testifie the same by their works; For if they think there is a God, wherefore do they not resigne vengeance unto him? Wherefore are they so doubtfully distracted? Wherefore do they forge such wicked deceits, to deceive one another? Wherefore do they so warre upon one another (whether with right or injustice it matters not) and contend together for mine and thine? Why doe they lie, cogge, and flatter one another? Wherefore do they labour night and day to get and heap up riches? Wherefore are they so forgetfull of the Word of

God, and so little esteeme his precepts and commandments? But that they think God cares not for them, or that he cannot or will not revenge them; therefore it is necessary that they help and revenge themselves; or that they think that while too long to wait and expect the help of God, before that he take vengeance and punishment they themselves shall be overthrown; And because they think that nothing but povertie comes upon them, if they have any commerce and communion with the truth of God; therefore it is necessarie that they help themselves, and labour for their living, by lying, cogging, deceiving, and usury, and the like; this makes a man rich and honourable. As for the Word of God that is but a late help, and deficient in adversity; it stands us in hand, therefore to adore our selves, speak big and swelling words; elevate

vate our selves as much as we can. Who but my self is God? saith the world in the course of her Life.

## Chap. X.

*An Answer to certain Objections, that we ought to be wise, and not fools; and how we ought to be wise, and how foolish.*

But you will say, that the learned shall shine as the starres or sun in heaven, and in a thousand places we are commanded to apply our hearts unto wisdom, as in the *Proverbs* and *Eccles.* wise men are commended?

To which I answer, that it is rightly spoken, if it be rightly understood, to wit, of the tree divine and heavenly knowledge, which God himself doth work and teach in those that are poore in spirit; I

say, it is understood of the wisdom of the tree of life; and not of the deadly and foolish wisdom of the flesh, which is the knowledge of good and evill; and the Scriptures will have us to acknowledge our folly, and to be made fools in our own judgement, (and indeed we are so, but we would not be accounted so) and forget all things whereby we may become truly wise, and receive the influence of divine knowledge into our souls; For we are all foolish and wicked, and we will not see and perceive it, nor believe it; and therefore God would have us by confessing our folly in true simplicity, to give a farewell unto it, and by submitting our selves over unto God, be made truly wise and learned by him.

Hereupon it is that *Solomon* calls them fools, whom *Paul* calls wise and prudent; *Solomon* calls them what they are indeed in the sight of God;

but

but *Paul* cals them what they seem to be in their own eyes, and in the sight of men: We must unlearn, and therein strive to be fools in that wherein we learn and strive to be wise in. But as it is given us of God, so it can be learned from none but God; and as the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, begets a mutuall love of him again; Even so Gods knowing of us, begets in us a knowledge of him, as *Paul* witnesseth to the *Galathians*; after that ye knew God, or rather are known of him.

As also to the *Phill.* I desire to know as I am known. And also 1. *Joh.* 3. He first loved us. Also in another place: If any man love God, he is born of God. Out of all these places I gather, that God is never known, loved, sought, or found of us, until we be known, loved, sought and found of God; as Christ saith to the Pharisees: the kingdom of God

is in you; and *Paul* to the *Athenians*: He is not farre off from every one of us; for in him we live, move, and have our being. But this is most miserable & lamentable, that those who professe themselves to know God, know him not as they ought; as *Paul* testifies of the world: If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. And again, If any man seem to know any thing, he knoweth nothing as he ought.

We should know this, that by nature we know nothing, but are altogether blind, dead, and fooliſh in ſpirituall things, and this knowledge ſhould make us nothing, fooliſh and children in our own eyes; But we deſire to know, and ſeem wiſe, whereby it comes to paſſe that we know not how, or for what end we ought to learn knowledge, for wiſdom is not given unto us for this purpoſe, that thereby being puffed with pride, we extoll our ſelves, and become

come ſomething in the eyes of the world, but on the contrary to make us nothing. This is the knowledge of God, that makes us fools and children to our ſelves & the world; it doth not puffe us up, making us ſeem wiſe in our own opinior; No, for that is the knowledge of the Serpent, both moſt devilliſh and deadly.

Thus you ſee that the whole world knows not what, how, and for what end they ſhould deſire to know, but alwayes ſtrives againſt God in their knowledge; and know not of what things they ought to be ignorant of, but chiefly are deſirous to know thoſe things they ought to be ignorant of; and ſo by their own art and knowledge make themſelves fools.

Briefly, that which they do know and do deſire to know, that they ſhould learn to unknow; and what they reſiſt to know that they ſhould

learn to know, otherwise God will never acknowledge them for his own, because God hath determined never to acknowledge, crown or reward any thing in us, but his own gifts and works, that is never to love or accept any thing in us but himself: For he alone is the Light, Life, the way, and the truth, so that whosoever is not in him, or he in them, they alwayes wander in the paths of error and shadow of death. Now every man knows what it is to walk in darkness. The walls of Jerusalem were not to be opened before the Sunne did rise; even so should no man intend to go forth before the Sonne of righteousnesse arose in his heart; since all things depends upon him, and he should be our Teacher and Example, by whose instruction we should learn, and by whose Example we should walk, as the Scriptures testifie.

It is an easie thing to say, that the world

world is in darkneſſe, and uncapable of the ſpirit of truth: but no man will either acknowledge or beleeve himſelf to be the world, or that the whole world to God is all fleſh; as the ſonnes of *Adam* all were naturall men, with the univerſall righteouſneſſe, reaſon, & wiſdom therein, but by the world men think to be underſtood, the Turks, Gentiles, and Heathens; and I know not what people of the farthеſt parts of the world, attributing ſo much to arts, tongues and Scriptures, which they [illegible] prefer above the ſpirit; and if [illegible] do read and have a Bible, they [illegible] it enough, and that by which they may eaſily obtain the holy Ghoſt; not conſidering that either the holy Ghoſt muſt be their guide, and enlighten them in the knowledge of the Word, or otherwiſe it is but a dead Letter; and is ſo farre from bringing life with it, that it mortifies and kills the Reader: as *Paul* implies,

implies, where he saith, the spirit quickens and not the letter.

The Jews in ancient times, and so men in these dayes do boast themselves of the word of God, and are strongly perswaded, that out of it they are able to gather life to their souls; but they are far deceived.

Wherefore Christ saies, In whom think ye to have life. As for the Scriptures his testimony of them is this, that they are them which testifie of him.

Therefore all Arts and knowledges are no wayes the cause of life; but the knowledge of Life to know him in and with God; wicked nature hath alwaies a perverse end, proposed to it self, and therefore it desires to know all things, not for God but for its own sake; therefore all things are to the flesh (as it is its self) vain and perverse, if the learning of so many Arts had been necessary to salvation, God had created

ted and taught them in the beginning; Neither would he have ſuffered that men ſhould ſo long have wanted that, without which they were not able to attain to Life; but becauſe they were formed out by men, & ſtill are found out by them, though no man be any whit the more unhappy, if ſo be he never know any thing of them; Yea he were more happy if he could unlearn them, though with greater difficulty then he learned them; you may by the Tree conjecture what the Fruit is, what humane Arts and Sciences are: to wit, the fruit of the forbidden Tree; How then can they conduce any thing unto Life, being the onely precepts and inventions of men?

Therefore very well in praiſe of that word of God doth *Cornelius Agrippa* call all arts and actions of men meer ignorant fables and fooliſhneſſe, in his book *De vanitate Scien-*

*Scientiarum.* The beginning and end whereof we have put in this book, that we may not seem alone with *Ernestinus* to contemne Arts and praise folly.

Wherfore if thou lean unto arts, please and boast thy self in them, having any hope or accounting thy self any thing better for them, they will prove death unto thee, for they do no more conduce to thy happinesse then garments, time, place, or such like circumstances: But as they are the inventions of the flesh, so do they produce no other thing in thee then the works and fruits of the flesh, to wit, self-love, pride of spirit, contempt, disdain, security, and such like; And this is verified by experience, for no men are more perverse, craftie and covetous, then these worldly wise & learned men be, being men drowned in their own self-love, esteemed of themselves worthy to be beloved and reverenced

ced of all; full of rash judgement, lovers of all pleasures, and so full of all vices: that the whole world gives credit to no men lesse, speaks worse of no men more: being full of taunting and reproaching proverbs against them, such as these, the better learned, the worser mannered, the better scholler the worser Christian. No man scapes scotfree out of the claws of a preist. He that will have an honest house, must keep it from Preists, Apes, and Doves. A Monk dare do as much as he dare think. These and such like proverbs are common in every mans mouth; which arise from this that they are so swollen with the poyson of the fruit of the forbidden tree, so puft up with the false opinion of their own wisdome and righteousnesse, that no rich man is more insolent by reason of his riches, then these perverse wise men are by reason of their arts and knowledge; So that it

is as easie to remove *Cyrus* out of his Kingdome, as one of these wise men out of his opinion and tenent; And truly it cannot be but by how much a man is more wise in the art of the forbidden Tree, by so much he is more miserable, as Christ witnesseth in the Gospel: that the multitude of their arts and knowledge is an impediment why they come not into the Kingdom of God, and publicans and harlots enter in before them.

Therefore these men are to perish with their arts, and to depart emptie, & so far is any of them from leaving his art, wisdome, knowledge, and righteousnes, that he esteemeth these to be the good & riches of the soule; which neither theeves can steale, nor moathes corrupt, when in very deed they are nothing but the inventiõs of Satan, fruits of the forbidden Tree, and the death of the soule; For the life of the soule is the true knowledge of God, which himselfe

elfe doth worke and teach in us, to wit, the fruit of the Tree of life, whoſe fruit is that it makes a man gentle, loving, humble, lowly, meeke, &c. By this let a man examine himſelfe, with what wit and righteouſneſſe he is endued; For if day by day he be leſſe in his owne eyes, and in the judgement of the world, if he ſeeme ſtill more fooliſh in himſelfe, and a Childe in his owne thoughts, his knowledge is divine, the Seed of the Woman, a Fruit of the Tree of Life; but if he finde contrary effects in himſelf, then is all his wiſdome Deviliſh, the Seede of the Serpent and Fruit of the Forbidden Tree, and ſo the death of the ſoule.

## Chap. XI.

*Of the Tree of Life, what it is? why Adam was excluded from it, and not permitted to eate thereof.*

I Alſo grant thus much, that this Tree was viſible in Paradiſe, and had

had this divine vertue bestowed upon it, that whosoever eate thereof, should live for ever; But whereas *Adam* before had eaten of the Forbidden Tree, and had incurred death, therefore he should not eate of this Tree of Life, least otherwise he should have lived for ever, and in a word, God should have been false in his Word, which was that he should dye the death, but God who is Life it selfe, would not for ever be angry with his Creature, but was unwilling that man should for ever live in that misery, into which he had cast himselfe, and therefore drove him out of Paradise, and afterwards shewed him the way by which he should returne into Paradise againe, and eating of this Tree live for ever, and then guarded the Tree of Life with a *Cherub* and a flaming sword, least man in his exile should have presumed to have come to this Tree, and have eaten thereof.

The

The will and counsell of God was that it was better that man should dye in the flesh, and so put off this miserable life, and change it for a better, then live in it for ever.

Therefore God who cannot nor will not hate us, dealt very way most mercifull with us, if so be we would truly consider of it.

Now do I thinke that the same also happened in the true Paradise of *Adams* heart, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good & Evill, is the Seed, Knowledge, & wisdome of the Serpent: And the Tree of Life, is the Seed of the Woman, & the wisdom of God; and these two Trees are, as God and Satan; so contrary one to another, that the one brings life unto us, and the other death.

Therefore he that eates of the one, its impossible he should eate of the other, because they are divided by a flying Cherub and a flaming sword; which I interpret, sinne and disobedience,

dience, which ſometimes in the Scriptures is called a partition wall.

For he that eates of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill, that is, he that is poſſeſſed with a Diabolicall wiſdome of the fleſh, he cannot eate the Tree of Life; that is, he is departed from divine knowledge and wiſdome that proceeds from God: For theſe two wiſdomes are incompatable, they cannot be in one and the ſelfe-ſame heart, being as contrary one to the other, as heaven to hell; He that eateth of the Tree of life, & is partaker of divine knowledge, he cannot dye, neither ſinne; For this Fruit eats the eater of it, and changeth him into its owne nature, into life, as the Scriptures doe teſtifie of thoſe that doe eate the fleſh of Chriſt.

For it is one and the ſame thing, to eate Chriſt, to live in his Word, to eate of the Tree of Life, to beleeve in God, &c. as it is alſo the ſame thing

thing to be in *Adam*, to live in *Adam*, to eate of the Tree of Knowledge, of Good and Evill, to obey the word of Satan, and be God.

Therefore thoſe that eate of this deadly Tree, & adhere to the word and wiſdome of the Serpent, & are borne of Satan, theſe cannot do any thing that is pleaſing unto God. As on the contrary the other doth not any thing that is diſpleaſing to him.

Therefore he that would be the one, muſt bid adew to the other: He muſt put off the wiſdom of the Serpent, and vomit up the Fruit of the Forbidden Tree, who would eate of the Tree of Life.

*Adam* muſt dye in us, and the wit of the Fleſh muſt be unlearned of us, if we would have Jeſus Chriſt to live in us, and obtain the direction of the holy Spirit; For the death of the one is the life of the other; the infirmity of the one is the ſtrength of the other.

No

No man can ſerve two Maſters, neither is it poſſible to unite *Adam*, God, and the Devill together.

## Chap. XII.

*The praiſe of the Word of God, on which alone man ought to build, reſt, reſide, and it onely know, if he will remain unſhaken in adverſitie, have his Faith manifeſt and approved, and finde quietneſſe to his Soule.*

INdeed there be many arts profitable to the body, which God the belly hath created, & yet doth daily finde out, which truely bring much profit to the kitchin; & onely ſerve, worſhip, & obey their God the belly moſt zealouſly, as it is expedient they ſhould. But as the cõmon Proverbe is; that which is profitable to the body, doth often hurt the ſoule, and that which is the bellies & fleſh, as life, food, & plentie, is oftentimes the death of the ſoule, and a meere poyſon unto it, becauſe the ſpirit is contrary to the fleſh. Hence

Hence it comes to passe that table or belly arts, because they be the fruit, off spring, & wit of the flesh, are altogether vain, famine, & death unto the soule. And on the contrary, that onely art, the end whereof, was not for God bellies advantage; which the whole world doth so much sleight and little regard, that onely true wisdome and Theologie, to wit, God and the knowledge of his Word in him, together with the knowledge of him divinely infused into our soules, is the sole art onely necessary to mans salvation.

Therefore the true, heavenly, and divine art, the true Tree of Life, of which whosoever eateth hath everlasting life.

Furthermore, I say, this art is the food, wine, milke, excellency, defence, and all whether the profit, pleasure or advancement of Soules; All other arts being vain, doubtfull, and the poyson of the soule, hurtfull and

and deadly to the ſpirit of man, if he leane upon them, reſt in them, glory in them, or build his happineſſe upon their ſandy foundatiõ. In a word, they are the Fruit of the Tree of knowledge of Good and Evill, of which whoſoever eats, as I have amply proved, he ſhall dye the death.

Therefore I deſire that we would not be too righteous nor wiſe in our owne eyes; As *Salomon* (*Eccleſ.* 8, as alſo *Prov.* 3.) doth faithfully inſtruct us; that we ſhould eſteem nothing to be our wiſdome, righteouſneſſe, or any other vertue in us, but onely to know God in & with himſelfe, and love, praiſe, worſhip, feare, honour, and underſtand him as we ought. Which thing muſt neceſſarily proceed from God himſelfe, being the worke of his eternall, and in it ſelfe everlaſting and immutable Word, which without ſpokesman frõ him, proceeds out of his mouth: that he ſpeaks in our hearts, teacheth him-

himſelfe in our ſoules, imprinting & engraving his Image in us, thereby enlightning ſo our underſtanding, that to ſpeake in a word, he ſo teach, love, know, underſtand, pray unto, heare, guide, governe and worſhip himſelfe in us.

All other things whatſoever are to dull, and all the vertue of things are to baſe, that they ſhould be able to teach us God, and give us everlaſting felicitie; or that God by them ſhould give it unto us.

God will by himſelfe, teach himſelfe, give, and convay himſelfe into our hearts: Neither will he ſuffer his honour to be given to any creature, that by it we ſhould be ſaved or ſanctified; but he that heareth and learneth it of the Father commeth unto him.

He will himſelfe be the Maſter of ſpirits; and ſo a ſpirit ſhall be taught of a ſpirit. And all thoſe that are divinely inſtructed of the all-knowing

and underſtanding God, ſhal be ſaid truely to be learned and wiſe.

The fleſh hath teachers, who belonging to the old Covenant, have commerce with the fleſh. The new Covenant, becauſe it is ſpirit & life, and in like manner hath a ſpirituall and new birth of God to be inſtructed, hath alſo a ſpirituall word and Maſter to inſtruct it, which is the word and ſpirit of Life.

Therefore if any man would know himſelfe, ſubmit himſelfe quietly to the direction, & permit himſelfe to be ſpoken too, ſought and found in him; He ſurely ſhould be elevated to a wonderfull light; if any man, I ſay, doth follow the inſtruction and Doctrine of the Father in himſelfe, he verily ſhould finde God in God and with God. But the world buſied & occupied in the creatures, paſſeth away in a confuſion, & not conſidering the hidden and ſecret treaſure that is cloſed in his heart; Neither

ther seeks for this precious Pearle, but covered all over with the earth of the Creatures, remaineth in darknesse with the multitude of his arts and sciences; weary, ignorant, and void of all true arts and sciences; yet doth he in the meane space learn art after art, further and further searcheth into the mystery of knowledge.

And to use the words of St. *Paul*, Is alwayes learning, & never able to come to the knowledg of the truth; but the more he learneth, the more perverse he is; and to such a madnesse doth he come at last, through his overmuch wisdom, that he quite forgets what to say, babble, determine, beleeve, and what opinion to hold; and so he together with his fraile foundation & fickle arts, staggers here and there, slides out of one errour into another, untill he become vaine in all his imaginations, and like to Foxes, caught with all their tricks and turnings; is thereby

miserably ensnared in the Nets and snares of his owne arts and sciences. But the Christian like to the Catt, hath but one way, knowes but one art, whereby he is able to save himselfe, yea that a chiefe one, *viz.* his God, in whom he hath all things, knowes, loves, and comprehends all things; And therefore he scapeth, when the Fox, though he know many sleights, and those crafty ones indeed; yet often together with his sleights, he falleth into the power of the Gods, & the hands of the hunter.

Therefore thou canst boast of nothing, nor build upō any other thing whatsoever, but only that sure foundation and art, which is God himselfe, and his holy Word: For all other things forsake man in adversitie, except the hope and confessio of God; this is the true preacher in our hearts, if any man will attend and hearken to what he shall speak in him, he hath planted in us the see

of the woman neer unto the ſeed of the Serpent, for oppoſition unto the ſame; yea he hath confirmed his Spirit, finger, word, and Image in us; his ſpirit he hath clothed in us with fleſh, and hath placed it captive in the midſt of its enemies in the tabernacle of the fleſh, that it may prevail and overcome, and ſubduing the fleſh may with it ſelf carrie it unto God, deifie it, engrafe it, and unite it unto God; For this is the fight between the fleſh and the ſpirit in us, of which *Paul* ſpeaketh of.

Therefore if any will yeeld himſelf over in the midſt of his enemies to the holy Spirit, and glory in God as in a moſt fortified Camp in him: God would (without doubt) once come and vanquiſh his enemies, and ſo he ſhould know all things to eternall Life.

But the World doth not attend unto God in himſelf, alwayes occu-

pied with the ſound or noiſe of the creatures, paſſeth on with tumult and confuſion, and ſo knows nothing, hears nothing, learns nothing, though in the mean time it compaſſeth, ſearcheth, and inquireth out a thouſand unprofitable arts, and continually learns, and the longer it learns, it is the more unlearned, untill ſliding into errour at laſt, it fals quite down.

But if men as Chriſtians do, would abide with God privately in the ſchool of their hearts; and with *Mary* would ſit attẽtively at the feet of their Lord, and would both hear and learn what God would be pleaſed to ſpeak, teach, and interpriſe in them, verily they divinely inſtructed, would at laſt vomit up all their arts, as ignorant and folly. And with *Paul* would forget them, deny them, and account them as droſſe and dung.

Standing water is eaſily made bright

bright with the beams of the Sun; and a rolling ſtone gathereth no moſſe; but the roaring Rivers of this world muſt neceſſarily be either lukewarme or cold.

Therefore it is behovefull, that before all things we turn unto God in our ſouls, and compoſe our ſelves with him in quietneſſe; daily talking with him, hear him, and learn of him. Which thing the whole world is ignorant of; it knoweth not how to hear the word, the Maſter, the teacher, and how to learn of him in himſelf; but alwayes it flyes out of its own heart into the mouth of man; who when they be altogether lyars, filthie, vain, it comes to paſſe that they are alwayes deceived; are alwayes learning, and heaping many arts; when notwithſtanding with all their arts they are ignorant and fooliſh, becauſe that which they know, is but meerly ſurreptions, theeviſh, untried, taken upon

truſt from others, of which they themſelves never had experience; but if any to pleaſe the people have profunctorily beleeved, yet together with the people they beleeve ſome other thing.

Then truly like Bees they flie out in ſwarming ſometimes, proſecuting a poore Weſell, making deare enquiry into a matter of little moment, and fall into ſome matter of diſpute, upon whoſe foundation and ground they are altogether ignorant of, untill they be ſatiated with it, then they fall upon ſome other thing.

So in times paſt all Iſrael (in whom all the whole world is figured) together with their Kings and Prieſts did fall, untill they wholly erred from the Faith, and once taken were led away captive.

Read the people painted in my book of the World.

Now I call with *Paul* the word of

of God: that fooliſh and offenſive ſpeech, which to wit, doth bring with it the croſſe, grief, and death of the fleſh, and maketh all things which ſeem ſomething to be nothing, and onely looketh upon and regardeth thoſe men who are nothing in themſelves, which in the eyes of the world ſeem the greateſt folly that can be. Neither can it be perſwaded, that letting paſſe that which it ſees, it ſhould embrace that which it neither hath nor ſees; for it would rather have one bird in hand then two in a buſh. Neither doth it doubt ſo it might keep it to preferre a temporarie life before a thouſand eternall lives.

And therfore the Word and the preachers of the Word have been perſecuted for fools.

Now the word of God is of ſuch a nature and force, that though it hath a vulgar ſtile ſo ſimple in the language of truth, yet it over-brow-

eth all things whatſoever riſe againſt it, it dulleth the edge of all wit, and theſe entiſing and corrupt contemplations, together with the more eloquent kinde of lying, it doth bring into ſuch ſtraight, that it maketh them to bluſh for ſhame; although (as it is alwayes the properties of lies and ungodlines) they will not confeſſe themſelves to be overcome; For the Word of God doth lay ſuch ſtrait ſiege to the heart of man, that every one, if he do not ſpeak againſt his own conſcience, is forced thus to think, and ſo to determine as the word doth ſpeak, that ſo it is, and otherwiſe it cannot be but a lie.

On the contrary burſts in with a long circumlocution, and one lye doth almoſt weigh ten lyes, that it may ſeem to be true and have a ſhadow thereof.

But the word of God, as I have already ſaid, doth proceed after a moſt

moſt ſimple manner, but it doth ſo gird a man, that will he or not, he becometh amazed, and with admiration aſtoniſhed and affrighted, doth ſay, this is the finger of God.

No man ever ſpake thus; for this word hath ſuch a ſharpneſſe, ſting, and ſtrength, that it pierceth even into the heart, and ſeperateth the fleſh from the ſpirit, ſo as the mind being captivated without all controverſie, aſſents to the ſame, and confirms the truth thereof with all aſſurance; not ſo craftie ſubtilties can be objected againſt the truth, but that may be battered, weakned, and refuted with one word; neither can any thing ſo acute be produced, which weakned with the like acute, may not be overthrown, onely the Word of God overcometh with ſuch force, that even the mind of the enemy is overcome and taken with it; the outward man alone, and the face of the fleſh, which would

not be bridled, ſeeks out all kind of ambuſhes, tricks and turnings, to eſcape this thunder-clap. And falſhood, for ſhame covers its face with its hands, and thereby thinks that the whole body is covered, that it cannot be ſeen.

Moreover, it is behoveful, that all other traditions of arts, words and ſpirits, be examined by the Word of God, as by an index, golden rule, and touch-ſtone.

I call that the Word of God, which is the Spirit and Life, (not the Letter) written without inke and paper in the hearts of beleevers, which ſpeaks unto the ſouls of all thoſe that are obedient unto it. This I call the Word of God; Not the Scriptures. For if we ſpeak properly, the Scriptures or Letters are not the word of God, but the mind, ſpirit, and that true divine meaning, which *Paul*, calleth the ſence of Chriſt and mind of the Spirit; and

Chriſt

Christ the Word of God.

This I say is the word of God, as St. *Paul* doth testifie: The Letter (saith he) doth kill; but the Spirit, that is the true and spirituall meaning thereof, which onely spirituall men are indued with, which doth quicken.

These alone have the Key of *David*, for the opening of all the seals of this closed book; to all other the book is sealed with seven seals; Of which mention is made in *Dan.* 7. *Apoc.* 5. and *Matth.* 13. by way of parable; and the vail of the Letter doth hang before their eyes, untill they turn unto God, and seriously will obey his will.

The spirit of understanding entreth into no froward scorner, who in the letter onely desireth to shew his nicitie and clarkship. For the truth is, that word of God, and his secrets, are made manifest to them that fear him.

There-

Therefore many in our times are ſnared, who betwixt the writings and the word of God do know no difference, and ſo do they eſteeme the Scriptures for the word of God, ſo as beſide it they know no other.

But it appears by the teſtimonie of many divinely taught, that the Scriptures are nothing but the husks, the ſhell, the ſheath, the lantern, the ſhrine, the letter, the cave, the vail of the word of God. From whence it ariſeth that they appear ſo ſiniſter, and in ſhew often repugnant, and are hidden from wicked men.

But the Word of God placed in and under them, is the kernell, the life, fulneſſe, and thing it ſelf, or ſubſtance: For otherwiſe thoſe learned men the Scribes and Phariſees had been bleſſed and happy, if the letter had been the word of God, *viz.* the light, &c. becauſe they had ſo well

conned

conned the Scriptures, that moſt part of them they could ſay by heart, yet were they for all that moſt miſerably to periſh with this Art; and ſo death is eaten by the Tree of good and evil, while yet men think thereby to have Life.

But Chriſt doth more ingenuouſly teſtifie, that they know not the Scriptures, that is, what in the Scriptures is the word of God; for what otherwiſe belonged to the letter and grammaticall ſence they writ, but knew not the mind of Chriſt, which was the force and meaning of the letters; and the letters in my judgement are of ſet purpoſe, ſo ſiniſter and darkly dictated by the holy Ghoſt, comprehended and declared, that thoſe impious ſwine and dogs may not underſtand them, according as Chriſt out of *Iſaiah* doth alledge them, & giveth this reaſon, why he ſpeaketh ſo obſcurely by ſimilitudes, and demonſtrateth

ſtrateth the ſame thing more ſignificantly in *John*, leſt we ſhould make an idoll of the letter; And that we ſhould think ſome other thing more neceſſarie to ſalvation then Bibles, to wit, that of God we ſhould deſire the Light of his word, which is hidden in this Lantern; and alſo that true teacher the holy Spirit, which may direct, lead, and inſtruct us in the holy Scriptures, and may open the ſeals thereof, declaring unto us the myſterie of this ſhrine, that is, his divine word, Law, pleaſure, wil, and meaning, hidden under the dead letter.

Many think it enough that they have Bibles, and know how to read; Here forſooth they find the holy Ghoſt, the word of God, that double Sword of the Spirit; yet wrapped up, and cloſed in the ſheath.

But who can underſtand, gain, find, and brandiſh the ſame? He anſwers by the Prophet *Iſaiah*: Young chil-

children, who will be afraid at this killing letter, they are sore out of heart, tremble and die for fear.

Therefore it is not enough, although it is good to have Bibles. What to have Bibles? All the Pharisees had the same, could say them by heart, and yet they lived no lesse blind and dead.

These very Bibles are the Tree of good and evill, of which they did eat death, although to the godly who consult with God about the meaning of them, and renouncing themselves, pray unto him for the obtaining of his Spirit, they be the Tree of Life; God will give his glory to none other, no not to the Scriptures, but hath made them dark unto us, and hath reserved the interpretation to himself, that he may teach, enlighten, rule, & guide, how, when, and as he will; and his will is, that we alwayes wax stronger, and by degrees come neerer to

the

the knowledge of the truth, if ſo be we would do the ſame by his help; but he hath not ſowen his word by the way-ſide for dogs and ſwines, but hath covered it, the ſame being hiding in the letter, that we may not reſt our ſelves contented in the letter, but dig up the hidden treaſure; and with all religion pray for grace and underſtanding, and conſult with his holy Spirit, that he may take us into his tuition, guide us, teach us, lead us unto the Tree of Life, the fruit whereof may feed us up unto eternall Life.

And this is the triall of all Arts, Doctrines, and Spirits, that they be compared and agree with the word of God, that that which is divinely unto us, we find to be true by his word in our hearts. In a word, that our ſpirits may confirm the ſame ſo to be by its teſtimony, as we have divinely learned the ſame, and that we ſuſtain for the defence thereof to die. There-

Therefore it is likely & ſo it ſhall be indeed, what doctrine ſoever cometh from God, the ſame is not repugnant to the word, which divinely taught, we have in our hearts, but agreeable, thereunto giveth teſtimony that we know his word, as we are known of God, and comprehended as we are comprehended of him, otherwiſe how could we ſay *Amen*, and aſſent if the contrary ſhould befall in us.

Therefore they are much deceived who think that nothing is the word of God, but what altogether differeth from our minds; & therefore compell themſelves onely to beleeve thoſe things which in their inward man they can perceive, feel, and comprehend to be far wanting in them, and contrary to them.

Indeed the word of God invadeth our hearts with an exceeding force, becauſe it is ſpirit, our hearts are fleſh; but where the beleeving heart

heart addicts it self to the worship of God, the word is soon incorporated in us, and our heart made one with it, is converted into spirit; so as now the truth it feeleth, yea & what more it witnesseth that to be true, which the spirit doth speak unto it; and is so bound that it necessarily must assent unto it; Neither doth it so compel or force it self to beleeve, but it is so compelled, that it cannot but beleeve, and would a thousand times make a losse of its bodie rather then beleeve otherwise.

So again the mind cannot be beleeved, & as long as the mind doth not assent, it is a sure argument, that as yet it hath not comprehended, nor as yet is the word incorporated in thee, nor the Sonne of God born.

For he who comprehendeth the word as he is comprehended, feeleth the same, yea testifieth & knoweth that the same is true.

Where-

Wherefore compare, or examine all learning with the teſtimony of the ſpirit. For if thou art a beleever, God dwelleth in thee, and thou art ſealed with his word and Spirit, but if thou doſt not beleeve, this examination nothing belongeth unto thee; For it is ſpoken to the beleeving *Theſſalonians*, try the ſpirits.

If in a wicked man the ſpirit were to be compared with his heart and with the letters, he could never rightly judge how he doth underſtand them, becauſe he taketh that to be the word of God whatſoever pleaſeth his wicked and perverſe heart and eyes.

On the contrary, it is commanded to the Saints, that they try & prove all ſpirits and doctrines by the word of God, which divinely taught, they have approved in their ſouls; not to the wicked who are unfit to everie good work, and whoſe judgement God doth not approve of.

But

But if they ſay, they are to be brought to the Touchſtone of the Word the holy Scriptures. I willingly grant the ſame, ſo that you underſtand that of the minde of the Scriptures, which is the onely word of God; which alſo only thoſe who are of God do underſtand, but if the Doctrine and Spirit be compared with the Letter of the Scriptures, it will be compared diverſly, every one according to his owne underſtanding, in which they are deceived; neither is this the true tryall, as more cleare then Light we may ſee it; Since all deſire the Letter to be this Judge, and thinke them of themſelves to be the ſame.

Therefore that which hath not the examination I ſpeak of, which I but now ſpake of, is as eaſily confuted as it is admitted, as *Gregory* ſaith.

Here are caſheered all the arts, explanations, orations, and comments of men, which areboughes and fruits of

of the forbidden Tree, in the Paradiſe of this world, from which as yet all men doe eate death, and yet nevertheleſſe, with *Adam* and *Eve* thinke themſelves to eate life, and hope to be Gods. Therfore all mens arts are no other then a plant of the Devill, who thinketh by this means to change men into Gods, and from hence promiſeth life and immortalitie, when nevertheleſſe death is before their eyes, ſo ſoone as they have eaten of this fruit.

Now that ſentence ſtandeth firme: *Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted ſhall be cut downe.*

Therefore all thoſe Arts muſt againe in their originall be brought to nothing.

That I confeſſe is the onely Scope of the holy Scriptures, which is the word of God, knowne of them who are of God; But that the literall and grammaticall ſence is this, I doe not thinke, which wicked men doe underſtand,

derstand, and also follow, and yet by Christ are denied to understand the Scriptures, but as they expound themselves in the Godly, out of the Doctrine of the Holy Ghost; And this meaning cannot be comprehended in open Commentaries & rules, but the Holy Ghost will have this book and mystery reserved to himselfe, neither will he have it imprinted, but will shew, teach, and open to all, according to the measure of every mans faith, as much as is necessary, neither will he have it so cõmitted, that one may teach another, and so incroach upon the priviledge of God, but will teach it himselfe, that all & every one of us may be divinely taught, and may glory that wee have learned the word of God from God, and not from men, with pleasant docility, yet so as men ought, and every one may one to another give that testimony which he hath learned from God.

So

So it cometh to paſſe, that with Chriſt and his Apoſtles we are witneſſes of the Word, not Miniſters of the Spirit; For who hath commanded the Winde, but onely the Maſter of the Winde.

To this belongs that which *Job*, *Jeremie*, and *Eſayas* ſay, that we ſhall all be taught of God, ſo as it ſhall not be neceſſary for us to be taught of any other, but that ſo its true as the holy unction ſhall teach us.

And whereas God is onely true, and all men are lyars, it cannot be but it muſt be a lye and errour whatſoever cometh not from God; and that cannot come from God which all wicked know and underſtand, Since they are not of God, but are ſeparated from him by the partition wall of ſinne.

Now what commeth not from God is ſinne, and not good; and what ſhineth not from his Light, is altogether darkneſſe, although it ſeeme to be Light and Wiſdome, as *Eſay* upbraideth the Caldean Philoſophers, their owne wit hath deceived them, and they were wearied with the multitude of their owne inventions, &c.

God ſpeaketh this againſt all arts, ex-

cept the art of God, formed in us by his Word; which exhibits unto us nothing to be meditated upon, and viewed in the Light but onely God, to know and understand God, because that word is verily God, without any distinction of nature; there as God cannot be defined, described, or divided; but if we speake properly, God is all in all things, and yet nothing of all these things which can be felt, conceived, or comprehended by sence, reason, or understanding, spoken, written, or heard; so is the Word of God infinite, infallible, incomprehensible, eternall, by it selfe existing, and farre exceeding all the writings and words of men, because it, as God cannot properly be written, read, or spoken. Since it is God, and was before writing or man was, and shall be when man is deceased and writing are ceased.

Therefore all things are subject unto vanity; For which cause the nature of all things are called vaine and vast, by reason of the accident of vanitie, although in it selfe it be good; onely the word of God, which in it selfe is perpetuall and semperternall, can neither be written in Letters, nor expressed in word, endureth

Hence it comes to paſſe, that whatſoever is ſpoken or written of it, as that which is not of God himſelfe, remaines but as a ſhadow, a figure, and teſtimony thereof, and is not properly God and his Word.

Now no man can ſpeake or utter this Word, therefore it is neceſſary that it ſpeake it ſelfe, in an obedient and willing heart; and for this cauſe it is required of every man, that he ſubmit himſelfe under the potent hand of God, void of his owne will, free and cleare from his owne heart, and ſubordinate to the will of God, that God or his Word may ſpeake, teach, ſeeke, love, finde, acknowledg, beſeech, hear, praiſe, honour, feare, and adore it ſelf.

This alone is the art of God, which he himſelfe doth teach in us, without this all other arts are nothing; for beſides this to know all things, is to be ignorant of all things. All arts without this art is vanitie, which yet is better conceived in heart then it can be uttered in word; yea it cannot be expreſſed or declared in words, therfore no man can teach the ſame to another, but it is to be taught and manifeſted by God, to the teaching

of which whosoever are sent, they are not Doctors or Masters, but onely witnesses of that Word, which by the vertue of God is before in our hearts.

Therefore it hath many names, which oftentimes are used one for another; so that as sometime the Father, sometime the Sonne, and sometime the Holy Ghost is called the Fountaine of Life or Truth; So the Word of God is sometimes called the Seed of God, sometimes his soule, sometimes his sonne, sometime his arme, sometime his hand, sometime his right hand, sometime his Law, sometime his will, sometime his image, sometime his inspiration.

And hither may be referred all the names which the Scriptures give to the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, and the word of God, which are all one, and referred unto one, serve to the signification of the same thing.

And this Word which in the New Covenant is called Christ, is the essence of all things which are, and all things are created by it, and also are preserved, nourished, and sustained by it, and in it.

So that all things have their being rather in the Word then in themselves.

And

And if God ſhould withdraw thiſ Word to himſelfe, as was the eſtate of them before the beginning of the world, while yet the world was not made of him, ſo ſhould all things neceſſarily in the ſame moment be turned to nothing againe.

Therefore doth God even to this day preach this Word unto us, and yet it is ineffable, as *Taulerus* ſaith, though in him all things have their eſſence and being in and from God.

Wherefore to commit and conſecrate a mans ſelfe to this living word of God, is the onely life eternall; and that true one art and part of *Mary* which cannot be taken from her; all other arts are vain and muſt periſh with the inventors and profeſſors, only to know God, and obey his Word, which the Scriptures calls to eate Chriſt, to beleeve in him, to put on the new man, to adhere unto God, to be born anew, to live to the ſpirit, to heare and receive the word of God, to be baptized, to be ingrafted into Chriſt, to receive Chriſt, and many other tearmes: is not only of it ſelfe immortall, but preſerveth all from death, who are indued with the ſame. No man can conſume

this bread, but it preſerves him the eater thereof, from eternall death, and hunger unto eternall life.

This treaſure can no theef take away, no ruſt or moath corrupt. In a word, this eternal word is to a Chriſtian all things: in adverſity a ſword & weapon againſt all dangers, meat to him that ſtarves, clothing to the cold, for want of divine grace, and a ſure ſanctuarie to every fugitive.

But he that knoweth all things, and is ignorant of this, knoweth nothing; even as he who knoweth and hath all things, & wanteth God, poſſeſſeth nothing; and if it could be, that any man could know all Arts, which all men at any time have known and underſtood; if he were a *Pandora*, or a *Hippias*, knowing all things, yet were he not therefore any whit better in the ſight of God; yea I dare ſay, he ſhould be ſo much the worſe, by how much he had glutted himſelf of the tree of knowledge, and eaten death; for the more poyſon is received, the ſpeedier will the deſtruction be.

And even as this was the fall & death of *Adam*, *viz.* to become a god, and to arrogate

arrogate to be ſomething in himſelf, and to know, I will not ſay to be ignorant of nothing. That fall cannot be forgiven, or repaired, unleſſe thou vomit up all that diabolical art and curious knowledge; and beſides eat of the Tree of life, which ſhall work in thee an utter forgetfulneſſe of all thoſe arts, and make thee a child, a fool, and reduce thee to innocencie under God, that at length thou mayeſt know that which God would know in thee; ſo he himſelf ſhould teach and ſuggeſt in thee by his word, according as it is ſaid; otherwiſe all things are unprofitable, yea though a man know all things, they are not onely unprofitable, but alſo a hindrance to this art of God. He that is ignorant of this, in vain hath he learned and known all things elſe beſides.

In the word of God alone, which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, is ſeated the rule of all things, the ſcope, doctrine, art, life, and truth, teaching what is to be done, what not to be done, what to be ſpoken, what not to be ſpoken, whether to enter, from whence to depart and come out.

All other arts they be variable what-

ſoever they be to time, fortune, vanitie, death, and obl'vion; and not onely theſe arts, but alſo the letters, books, forms, maſters, tongues, which we uſe, do periſh, and others after them, which ſucceed in their places, ſo that nothing is conſtant and of long continuance in the earth, but all things according to their viſible nature, are frail, mutable, and momentary. How often are the tongues themſelves changed; how often the forms being removed, do new ſucceed in their place (as I have ſaid before). Orthography is not ever like it ſelf, & the ſame with all people in all times; yea the true pronunciation of the Latin tongue (as *Cornelius Agrippa* in his book, called *De vanitate ſcientiarum*, formerly alledged by us) is periſhed, and no where extant. Moreover, the ancient letters of the Hebrews are gone, ſo that there is no memorie left thereof, but onely thoſe which *Eſdras* in their place invented.

Adde moreover, that the tongue is made very lame by the Caldeans, which alſo hath bin incident to periſh of other tongues; So that no man there is who can find out their ancient form and dialects;

lects; Beſides this, new words do alwaies creep in, the old word being grown out of uſe. And again, the old words are received, the new being thruſt out; ſo far forth, that nothing is durable or conſtant in this life. And if any man would obſerve, he ſhall find that our mother Tongue in *England* is daily changed: that at this day they ſpeak otherwiſe then they did a few yeers ſince; yea and ſuch a curioſitie and niceneſſes there is in the word and Tongues, that what men have a while made uſe of, ſuddenly they caſt away, as diſdaining the ſame; Everie man endeavouring to bring out ſome new and rare thing, that he ſeeme not to imitate the words of any other: inſomuch that the chief inventer of words do now obtain the chief praiſe and eſtimation of Art. And by this means all things are confounded in the earth; and what now is new, is preſently grown old, and anone becomes newagain; and the hearts of men, the Kingdoms, peoples, and Languages of the World, like to the courſe of the yeer.

In times paſt *France* ſpoke the *Dutch* language (as *Beatus Rhenanus* writing

of the *Germane* affairs, most elegantly proves) but now it hath gathered a proper speech to it self out of *Italy*, *Germane*, and *Spaine*, but most specially from *Italy*; which thing of the tongue was caused, perhaps by their war, because divers people being mixed together, they made and used a mixed kind of speech.

Hence it came to passe, that as yet they retain some of the Germain words: as *Suppen Sacken kushen*, which they almost according to the Nether Germains pronounce, after the bastard *Germaine Souper, Sacen, Cuysten*.

This I speak that we may see that nothing is constant or new in the earth, and that is true which *Terence* writ: Nothing is spoke now which was not spoke before; So nothing is done which was not done before. So that *Cornelius Agrippa* thinks the invention of *Gunpowder*, and guns was no new invention; of which opinion is the *Historian Volatiramis*; and this may be gathered out of the *sixt of Virgils Eneads*, where thus he writs of *Salmon*:

*I Salmon saw with pain and torment late,*
*Who would Joves fame & thunder imitate,*

For

*For carried by 4. steeds, with torch in hand*
*Through Elis City and all Grecian Land*
*Did ride in triumph, and command that all*
*Should give him honour and a dietie call;*
*O mad man, he who with his chariots raise*
*Would imitate the mighty thunders voice.*

And *Solomon* shews the same all along in the 3. Chap. of *Eccles.* as also in the first: that what hath been that shall be, what hath been done, the same shall be done, neither is there any thing new under the Sun.

There is some thing which is as if it were new, yet was that in ancient times which hath been before us. There is no memory of former ages, neither shall there be of those that are to come; amongst who are to be; and a little after things past, and things to come, are all forgotten, and the wise together with the fool do die. In which words what other thing would the Preacher shew then that all arts are subject to oblivion and death; Neither can they alwayes remain in the soul, but together with the body departs or perisheth by death. For nothing (I say) can adhere unto the Image of God (I mean the soul which is like

like unto God) and consist in death and fire; but what is onely God & his word, this is the onely endureable treasure, and the meat of Eternall Life: Not that opinion and Art of Philosophers, but the true good of the mind and soul, which can happen to no other thing but the word; although I do not denie but that word appeared to some of the Gentiles, and taught them; because God is *no respecter of persons*, but as a common Light of souls, as the Sun is the Light of the whole world; neither is the hand of God shortned, nor his eye envious, that he should not look upon the whole World.

With the same love, eye, and grace since we are all alike the same workmanship of God, all of the same love, estimation, and authoritie with him.

Hence thou mayst collect, that all arts (invented by men) are death, and fruits of the Tree of knowledge of Good and Evill. For assoon as *Adam* had eaten of that Tree, the same day he died in the eyes of God, as the historie declares; although afterwards according to the flesh he lived many yeers; as from heavenly matters the same day was his

eyes

eyes ſhut up, and he eate death, although in his owne judgement his eyes were opened, and he ſeemed to himſelfe to be a living God, knowing good and evill: Then began he to exerciſe his art, his cunning to expound, diſpute and ſeeke out a malicious ſubtil and captious meaning in all things, and alſo to deale deceitfully with God, and in all things to hide himſelfe; to cover himſelfe with *Fig-leaves*, to kiſſe his owne hand; in a word, to worſhip himſelfe, by inventing many arts amongſt his poſteritie.

And out of this Roote ſprung up all the precepts of men, their expoſitions, their arts; and ſo excellent a foundation have they, as both the inventor and the authour of them was the Devill; and the firſt Scoller that learned them, did eate death therefrom.

And this Science and Art is utterly to be abhorred, being no other then a Diabolicall perſwaſion, conceived in *Adam*, formed and hid in the Seede of the Serpent; And yet all the World, as *Adam* did, thinks that life is placed in it; neither doth it receive any inſtruction from *Adam*, neither indeed underſtand the hiſtory of *Adams* fall, or his riſing againe;

and

and that whole matter at this day doth live yet, accounting it but a History long since acted & done, and afterwards dare say, the Word of God endureth for ever.

Therefore wee must needs confesse, that nothing is past which in its kinde is not yet extant.

Whole *Moses* is urged upon Christians, neither is one jot of the Word of God lost, which shall not be fulfilled in every moment in spirit and truth.

Therefore the fall of *Adam* happeneth daily; daily doth *Adam* in his posteritie eate of the forbidden fruit; And therfore his Sonnes in *Adam*, as in the roote, are damned and dead.

Now this our fall as *Adams*, is amended and repaired, if we spit out and vomit up this knowledge of good and evill as poyson, and become as *Adam* was before his fall, children, fooles, and innocent Turtles, that we may eate of the Tree of Life, and suffer the Seed of the Woman to be ingrafted in us. This is not the Seede, the art, wit, and counsell of the Serpent; but the seede, word, will, the minde of God, the Tree of Life, which whosoever eateth, and suffreth

himselfe to be fed therewith, is indewed with Eternall Life.

Now in us there is a Medicine with poyson; For as by sinne the Tree of knowledge of good and evill was planted into the heart of *Adam*, so by his conversion, rising againe, and Seede of the Woman, the Tree of Life is planted by the Tree of death in the heart of *Adam*. From these two Seeds and Trees so different doe spring different fruits, so as one is poyson and death, the other is Medicine and Life; and if any man would know that plant, which is called man, he may easily know what he ought to thinke of his owne art, knowledge, wisdome, and righteousnesse, how that this pleaseth all men, and is of great respect with them; For what is current with the world but its owne coyne? What but the wisdome, art, and righteousnesse of the flesh, seemeth holy in the sight of men: onely the Holy Ghost can reprehend the world of sinne, righteousnesse, and judgement.

It is wonderfull to behold how the world doth daily yet eate death of the forbidden Tree; which tree you may call (as the Germaine Theologie doth) our

own

own will; and although God doe daily cry aloud in them, and moreover provideth by the witnesses whom he sendeth to teach them externally, that they abstain therefrom, or otherwise they shall reape death therefrom, yet none beleeveth but all follow that Serpent, which secretly in our heart doth speake thus: Not death shall you reap by any means, but if you know many arts, you shall be like unto God, & live for ever; (this the whole historie of the Bible remaines in force at this day;) & from hence ariseth a certain art and curiositie, enquiring & searching out; Neither will any submit himselfe doc bly and simply unto God, and obey his word.

But every man will be his owne, yea Gods Master too, & teach both himselfe and God, bring him into the Schoole, & there prescribe unto him, with whom, where, what, wherefore he shall doe, speake, permit, or omit.

Hence it commeth to passe, that wisdome is justified alwayes of her Children; & those men skilled in a thousand arts, and above measure cralty, God cannot satisfie, neither can he obtaine his Kingdome, or get any love or right at

their

their hands. Since they will be altogether Gods, and kisse their owne hands, will, wisdome, prudence, and reason.

The art of the Devill, which is sucked out of the druggs of the Serpent, hereupon we compose many books, desiring to teach the whole world, not knowing how to teach our selves.

From hence it comes that the proud Devill, alas! is buried deepe in learned men, whom their deadly knowledge doth so dangerously puffe up, that they thinke themselves worthy all honour, both from God & men, and oftentimes if not in word, yet indeed they make their estate as *Lucifer* and *Adam* did.

No man understandeth how we daily become *Lucifers* & *Adams*, but thinke that to be the relation of a thing long since done in *Adam*, and condemne his wicked pride and fall, when nevertheles, we all sticke fast over head and eares in the same, and yet deride others who in this kinde are foolish.

Divines preach much the Word and his precepts, but when they are to be kept, indeed they are wanting in this; yea what themselves do sometimes teach they will not suffer others to practise,

but

but contented meerly in the bare words, ſo making the word of God nothing but a meere Art, a matter of talke and diſputation, & had rather be called knowers and fearers of God, then lovers of him, that not in vaine is the Proverbe, which is verified by experience, teaching and confirming the ſame : *The greater Scholler, the worſer Chriſtian.*

The Grammarian is carefull that he erre not in his ſpeaking, but little regardeth the errour of his life.

In like manner the Poets had rather be lame in their lives then halting in their Verſes. Philoſophers would know all things but not themſelves. The Hiſtorian deſcribeth all peoples, but neglecteth himſelfe. The Orator is more ſollicitous that he ſpeake not rudely, then that he beleeve not, or live wickedly. The Logitian will ſooner forſake the truth, then leave his opinion and concluſion. They that have any thing to doe with Geometrie, do ſooner meaſure the Earth then their wayes. The Muſician taketh more care that his ſong be not diſſonant, then that his carriage be conſonant. Aſtrologers travell over the whole Heavens, and foretell things

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to come, but see not the ditch under their feete.

The Cosmographer relates of all Mountaines, Valleyes, Woods, and Rivers, but that makes him not one haire better in the sight of God. The Physician healeth sicke mens bodies, but neglecteth the healing of his owne soule. Lawyers are alone expert in the precepts of men, but negligently violate the Lawes of God, so as the Proverb from hence hath risen: Neither doth the Physitian live, nor the Civillian dye well, because Physitians of all men are most intemperate, & Civillians the worst Christians; and for that cause (as *Baldus* being an expounder of the Law himselfe doth say) the most part of them are taken away by sudden death.

Other Arts-men I will not here mention, but referre you to *Cornelius Agrippa, chap.* 100.

So the Devill doth compasse us about with the rope of folly; insomuch, that sometime with one question, sometime with another art, we be so amazed; in the meane time wee neglect the onely science of God, in which all things consist, even as the Adultéresse *Medea*, when

when her husband *Jason* pursued her, cut her Children in pieces, and dispersed their members in the way, that *Jason* might bee busied in the gathering of them up, while shee escaped out of the Countrey.

Alas, shall death, sinne, and the Devill thus please us? shall we alwayes thus seeke God in hell with the Devill? Light with darkenesse? The living among the dead?

One thing is necessary, and this no man will desire; many things are unprofitable and unhealthfull, yea deadly; yet these are greedily desired of, and devoured by all men.

In the word of God alone, and no other thing, are all things placed, neither therefore will it profit thee to have all things, to know, will, speake, surpasse in measure, dispute of, number, paint, adorn, judg, teach al things, &c. To know all things, is nothing else then to know the arts of the Devill, eaten by his counsell of the forbidden tree. Only to know the word and will of God, and to live according unto it; to be fruitfull in good workes, is the true art and eternall Life, eaten of the tree of Life; in vaine it is

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to know all things, yea rather it is bitter death, as hath been ſufficiently ſpoken of before.

Since therefore all the arts, wit, and righteouſneſſe of men, ſpringeth from the tree of knowledge of good and evill, or rather from the Devil; and therefore is the fall and death of *Adam*; it neceſſarily followeth, that the more any man is learned therein, and experienced, the higher he hath aſcended, the worſe and more perverſe he is; as he who hath made the greateſt proficiency in the wiſdom and knowledge of the devill.

And again, the more fooliſh a man is in this art, and in the wiſdom of the fleſh and the Serpent, and the more he hath unlearned, forgotten, and emptied himſelf thereof, the more righteous he is and wiſe before God: For we muſt altogether forget and unlearn this fleſhly art, this curious ſagacitie, this devilliſh righteouſnes; And in ſtead thereof muſt learn the onely new, contrary, and divine art, wiſdom, and righteouſneſſe, by the eternall word, by the ſeed of the woman of the Tree of Life, of which whoſoever eateth, ſhall have eternall Life. For this cauſe the Scriptures do ſo vehemently

mently urge new birth, childishnesse, tooli∫hnesse, hate of a mans life, denial of himself; which would not be, if there were any thing that is good or acceptable to God in man before.

No man thinks of this, but all men being puffed up with their own arts, wit, righteousnesse, goodnesse, &c. being secure and without conscience or religion, and yet do eat death of this forbidden tree, that is, of their own will, wit, reason, knowledge, goodnesse, and art, by that seed of the Serpent, implanted in them. But God doth exact nothing but the knowledge of himself, and that we would be obedient to his word, and submit our selves to be taught by him, which the Scriptures do sometimes call faith, which bringeth us unto God, begets us anew, and regenerates us, that thence do flow the waters of Life, the fruits of the spirit, love, peace, joy, a guiltlesse mind, & all other good things, which the Scriptures do sometimes call faith, which bringeth us unto God, begets us anew, regenerates us, that then do flow the waters of Life, the fruits of the Spirit, love, peace, joy, a guiltlesse mind, and all other good things, which

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the Spirit of God effecteth and poureth into us.

Therefore Theologie is the true Magick, the worſhip, and ſcience of God, which God doth equally exact from us all. And this is the ſame which God doth exact, teach, and effect by his Word in them, who offer and ſubmit themſelves to that his word and clemencie to be taught.

Therefore doth he ſo frequently and often admoniſh us, that he might make it known, that in him alone is Life and all other things to be found, and that he threatneth and inflicteth great puniſhment on them that deſpiſe him, as many places of the Scriptures do witneſſe, though the word of God is not tyed or bound unto them, as we will prove anone; yet they give good direction and teſtimony to the mind, if any man can have the ſame and uſe it aright; and yet do much more, abuſe the Scriptures then rightly uſe them. Nevertheleſſe they are not to be forſaken any more then a mans wife, children, meat, drink, &c. all which may be abuſed, but yet we muſt learn to uſe them rightly.

CHAP.

## Chap. XIII.

*Of the Majestie, of the free, constant and eternall Word of God, how it can be bound to nothing, included in nothing, nor buried in the Letter; and also the difference betwixt the internal and the externall word.*

THe Word of God is as God, infinite, invisible, ineffable, a Spirit and Life, which no mortall man can speak, see, or hear, but as far as is lawfull to speak of it after the manner of men, and by similitude.

The word of God is nothing else then the glistering, the essence, the image, the form and splendor, as well imprinted like a seal into all creatures, as more specially into the hearts of the faithfull, which in all things is the cause of their being, in all beleevers teacheth, in al wicked men reproveth, exhorteth, and contendeth and reprehendeth the world of sin, and which in the beginning did enlighten and inform the hearts of *Adam*, *Abel*, *Noah*, *Lot*, *Abraham*, *Job*, *Mercurie*, *Termigistus*, *Plotimus*, *Cornelius*, and all other upright-hearted Gentiles.

For though God giveth being, in above, below, without, and beyond all creatures,

creatures, and is the essence of all things that be; yet in nothing is he so clearly to be seen as in man, whom therefore he created after his own image, and perfected in Christ.

Therefore as brightnesse doth so proceed from the light of the Sun, as yet it is not seperated from the Sun, but for all that remains in the Sun, though it fill the whole world, and enlighten the same: So is the Son in like maner whole in the Father, and in all the creatures, as the light is in the Sun and in the whole world.

Therefore it is called the brightnesse of his Majestie, and the image or figure of his divine essence: Of the same nature, substance, and essence with God: So as nothing can be spoken of the Father, which may not also be verified of the Word: God is no where and every where, in all places, in all things, and yet incomprehensible above and beyond all things; limited to nothing, so far forth that the heavens and earth are not able to contain him, nor all the creatures. So is the Word.

Even as the light of the Sun hath an originall, from whence it proceedeth,

and a force and action into which it tendeth, which originall is the Sunne itself, and which externall active force is the hearing or enlightning of the whole world, or as the word of every man hath originall force and spirit; which originall is man, whose expression and image the word is, and of the same essence with him.

And thirdly, it hath an active force or spirit, which qualifieth this word, and makes it either cheerfull or angrie, or sorrowfull or displeased. So the original of this divine word is the Father, or the action, or active force, or vertue of it is called the holy Ghost.

As therfore the Sun is light, and the active force of that light, is the same: and as man his word, and the active force of that word, is the same; So the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost are one God. Wherefore nothing that appertains to their essence can be spoken of one, which cannot also be verified of all, that is all three; and as they are of the same essence, so of the same condition, disposition, and nature.

As therfore God is in nothing, and yet in all things; so also is his almighti

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Word, which is the ſame: as God is ſo in all things, yet that he can be included in nothing, and ſo above all creatures, as the earth, heaven, or any other creature is not able to conceive or circumſcribe him. And ſo in all creatures, as nothing is without him, or rather nothing there is that is not full of him. So is alſo his Word.

As God can neither be ſpoken or written, nor any man is able to declare what God is, but all things which are ſaid of him, are but images & ſhadows. I will not ſay as *Taulerus* and Dr. *Eickarius* ſay, ſeeing if we ſpeak truly and properly, the whole nature of God is far otherwiſe then man doth or is able to ſpeak of him.

Laſtly, as God is a thing oppoſite, and contrary to humane cogitation, and far otherwiſe then he is conceived to be in the thoughts of man; So alſo is the divine word of God.

As there is nothing ſo little in which there is not God; and again, nothing ſo great that can receive or circumſcribe God. As nothing is ſo little but God is leſſe, and nothing ſo great but God is greater, beyond, without, belowe, and

above all creatures; So also is his divine word.

As the free, almighty, eternall, immutable, omniscient, incomprehensible, invisible, and unconceivable God is the being of all things: So as all things consist rather in him then in, and by themselves (as *Taulerus* and the *Germain Theologie* in a thousand places do avouch) and is none of these things which can be seen or comprehended by sence or expressed by word: So his divine word is free in all, and beyond all, bound unto nothing, neither tyed to the prison, or letters, or cover of the letter, concluded, included, and so tied unto it, that otherwise it is no where: even as the following position and sentence of a Learned man divinely instructed do shew.

As the word is covered and hidden by the letter, so it is opened and revealed by the spirit.

Hence it cometh to passe that the letters be as a closed or sealed book; so as the dark letter, except it be opened, doth slay: but the Spirit doth quicken, and the letters are as a certain Image, void of Life and Spirit: that is a printed & dead expression of the Spirit, therefore they

want life (except the ſoul of the ſpirit be preſent) and do erre.

Therefore the Letters cannot be the word of God. Since the word is farre otherwiſe another thing then the letters; For it is a ſpirit, truth, and life: but the letters are contrary: fleſh the letter and death; yea the letters if they want the light of the word, are an offence; and if they want the ſoul of the ſpirit, are a ſtumbling block.

Therfore the letters are an otherwiſe thing then the word; that is, they are not the ſword of the Spirit, but a ſheath; For as the wombe of the virgin conceived the word, ſo the Letters.

For the Word is clothed both with fleſh and with the letters, that ſeed of *Abraham* layeth hold of the Scriptures or Letters (for they are both one) and again is apprehended by them; but the ſpirit is not apprehended in the fleſh or letter of the Scriptures.

The cauſe thereof is this: the fleſh or Letter cannot contain, conceive, or comprehend the majeſty of the Word; yet even as it was ſo in the fleſh, that the majeſtie thereof did not appear; ſo it is in the Letter, that true neither to all, or

to any one that reads, it is obvious and apparent.

This is witneſſed by all learned men in the meer letter, ſince the world began, who neither could know, find, or comprehend Chriſt in the fleſh, nor the word in the letter; which they ſhould have done, if Chriſt in the fleſh, or under the miſerie of the fleſh had been known unto all, not hidden but manifeſted; and the letter had been not the covering myſtery, but the true living and enlightning word of God it ſelf.

As therefore the fleſh was not the Word, but the cover thereof, and a certain great myſterie; So the Letters are not the word properly, but the ſhell, the bark and cover thereof.

The word was made fleſhly aſſumption, not mixture, and ſo the ſame word is made letters, yet not ſo as the ſame can be ſaid of the letters, as of the word, but as in a certain ſeal.

Therefore ſo far are the letters from being the word of God, that they onely be the figure and bark thereof.

For the word is not that which is ſpoken by the letter, but that which is expounded by the holy Ghoſt, and underſtood

flood onely of the Faithfull.

Therfore the letters do paint out, and shadow out, and after a certain manner set forth unto us the word, and expresse something, but are not the word, although they be spoken and expressed.

For the Word did not assume the flesh that it is not out of the flesh. So it did not so fall into the letter, that it is not out of the letter; For there was the Word when there was no Letters; and the same will remain after the Letters are perished.

Therefore as the Word was never included and circumscribed in the flesh, neither is it in the letters.

For so it was in the bodie, as it never yet left heaven, and in the same manner it is so in the Letter as yet it is everie where.

Therefore the Word is in the Letter altogether, but not all. Hereupon we see that the letters have been exercised with a continuall encrease and addition.

Therefore the letters are the image of the Word, and not the Word it self; And if they be, they are altogether a written, and a dead, and not a living word; For there is a twofold word, one

that quickneth, *viz.* the Spirit, another the Letter, which is ſaid to kill and ſlay.

The living Word is that which inwardly teacheth, and maketh us to fructifie; the dead Word is that which in the Fleſh and Letter is propoſed unto us.

The living word is a true light, which enlightneth all men, and therefore a regenerating ſpirit, becauſe it reneweth all things. In a word, it is the power and might of God, which giveth unto us that knowledge, ſence, ſoule, and life, which is from God A certain brightneſſe of the face of God, which enlightneth us from above, and imprints in us the unction of the holy Ghoſt, by which it teacheth & inſtructeth us in all things; But the dead word are the Letters, that ſealed booke, and dead Letter, ſence, and will, which is the word of the fleſh, not of the Spirit of God.

The true and Living Word is that which God begetteth in us, and the Spirit of God effecteth in us; But the dead and literall word is that which the Letters ſhew unto us and men propound.

Therefore he doth not alwayes want the Word who hath not the Letters: for

for he may have the interior who wants the exterior word, to wit, the Law of God written in our hearts.

Hence it comes to paſſe, that no man hath abſolute neede to be taught of an other, or to admoniſh his brother concerning the knowledge of God.

For all theſe ſhall know, from the leaſt to the greateſt, and are all the Diſciples of Chriſt divinely taught.

This writing is not printed with inke and paper, but written with the finger of God in the tables of our hearts.

This is the Doctrine of the truth, and the inſpiration of the Spirit, to wit, the propheticall breathing, the inſpiration of the Spirit, and the true art of God.

Moreover, he may have the living word of God who wants the dead of the Letter; and the thing it ſelfe who wants the ſigne, that is, the Life of the word, though he wants the dead Letter; For two things are chiefly to be conſidered in the word.

The firſt is the diſpoſition and nature of the word, which is a certaine Light intended for the enlightning of men.

The other is the action of it, that is, the Spirit, which giveth action & operation

to the word. For the word hath not onely a knowledge, but also a certaine action, it is not onely a Light and splendor in us given from above, but also Life.

The interior word containeth both of these which sometimes is called the Kingdome of God, sometimes the Spirit, sometimes Christ dwelling in us. For it is not onely a Light, way, and guide, but also Spirit, truth, and Life; that is, which not onely teacheth man that he may understand, but also moves him that he workes.

But the exterior word is farre from this priviledge, and hath a far different nature; For it is nothing else but a certaine forme and figure of the interior, I will not say a shadow. Therefore the interior words, as it is the onely lively, so it is the onely true word, as being the truth and life.

But on the contrary, the exterior is nothing but a killing Letter, and a deceitfull figure of the word.

Hence it ariseth the Letter (as Christ) becomes a certain snare to wicked men, a stone of offence, darknesse, not Light, death, and not Life.

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Therefore it is neceſſary, that beſide the exterior word, the interior be ſought after and knowne: Since the exterior deceiveth a man with its ſhape, is death and darkneſſe, unleſſe the Light and Life of the Spirit be together preſent with it.

Moreover, the exterior ſuffereth a man to be ſluggouſly and idle, except the power of the interiour be preſent with it. Therefore the interiour word may be without the exterior, as the exterior without the interior.

Therfore it doth not neceſſarily follow that a man hath the word of God, becauſe he pretends and hath the letter; as on the other ſide it followeth not, that he who wanteth the exterior word or letter, wanteth alſo the interior true, and heavenly word, which is God himſelfe. For he doth not alwayes want the word who hath not the Letter; For the Letters doth onely give a teſtimony of the word, ſo farre are they from being the word it ſelfe; yea they are ſcarce the Image of the living word; Much leſſe are they it, which neither can be written nor expreſſed by words, both which is incident to the Letters.

Therefore

Therefore the Letters are farre from being the word of God, yea all the word, though ſometimes they bee called the word of God; as the image and picture of a man is called ſomtimes by his name; even as God is ſometimes called man, and the word fleſh: not that God is man, or the word or ſpirit is made fleſh, by imitation, appellation, and permixion; So as what is ſaid of one, may be verified of the other, or ſo as God ceaſe to be God, & to be truely changed into man, as that water in *Cana Galilee* was changed into wine.

Or ſo as the word is ſo fleſh, as not now it is not the ſpirit, or the word, but fleſh, in no wiſe.

The word is not ſo in the Letter, that they be one and the ſelfe ſame thing, or ſo as the word ſhould have changed it ſelfe into the Letter; and yet well and rightly the Letters are called the Word of God; ſo as God is called Man, and the Word fleſh; although to ſpeake properly, neither is the Word of God changed into Letters, nor God into Man, nor the Word into fleſh.

Therefore both theſe may be true, the

Letters

Letters are the Word of God, and the Letters are not the Word of God.

Now although the Letters are ſometimes in ſome reſpect the word of God, yet truely are they not the ſole, nor altogether, nor all the Word of God; yea if we ſpeake properly, they are not the Word of God, which either can be ſpoken or written; and that the Letters are not the ſole word of God, may be made knowne by this: That many things beſides the Scriptures are revealed and inſpired unto many, and many things are ſpoken and written by them which are not conteined openly in the Letters, yea which ſometimes are contrary to the dead Letters.

The Prophets, and *Moſes* and Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, whoſe words ſeeme to be contrary to the Prophets, what they have written of the Temple, the Sacrifice, Circumciſion, and of the viſion of God.

Moreover, the true Word of God hath beene from all eternitie; yea even before any Scripture was, (as I have ſaid before) and it will be hereafter when the Scriptures are periſhed. Therefore the Word is improperly in the Letter

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and fleſh, and therefore it is improperly called fleſh or the Letter; For my word (ſaith Chriſt) is Spirit and Life.

Therefore the word cannot be that word which is fleſh or dead Letter; wherefore though the word truely and indeed is onely in Spirit, as in which it onely liveth, yet it is alſo in the fleſh, but yet weake if there it be alone without the Spirit and Life.

It is alſo in the Letter, but altogether, dead, unleſſe the Spirit doe quicken it as the ſoule doth the bodie; and it is in both and yet not truely, and if truly, yet not all, and onely, and lively.

Now, although the word is in the Spirit lively and true, yet after a more peculiar & excellent manner it is in the fleſh then in the Letter, although the Spirit be preſent with the Letter, and lend a hand, it teacheth nothing, but when the ſpirit dwelleth with the fleſh, it not onely teacheth, but alſo maketh alive, and burſteth out into workes.

So the letter of the Law brings men to no perfection, although it be the word of God, as alſo the Scriptures ſpoken by the mouth of God, and written by his finger; For the word of the Law

Law did teach the knowledge of the precept, but did not give man a will and ſtrength to fulfill the ſame, but the word which is made fleſh giveth life to beleevers.

Hence it commeth to paſſe, that the fleſh inſpired with the word and ſpirit of God, wills and doth keepe the Commandement of God.

Therefore the word in the fleſh doth onely give an Example of life, when on the contrary, it leaveth in the letter all things idle and ſleepie.

But in the Spirit it truely ſtirres up the heart and affections towards the Law, for the Spirit is the life and ſoule of the word, and therefore the word it ſelfe; but the fleſh is a certain imitation of the word, the letters a certaine printed picture and copie of the word. Wherefore the written word is not the true word, but a certaine image thereof; yea the Scriptures pronounced in words, are not the true word of God, but onely a teſtimony thereof: For the Scriptures had beginning in time by occaſion, but the word was from all eternitie. Adde to which the Scriptures doe lead men into errour, except the interpreter, *vis.* the Spirit be preſent. And

And they are a ſealed booke, and a perplexed Laborinth, unleſſe the Spirit be preſent, as the Treede of *Theſius*, to guide us, and as the Key of *David* to open unto us.

Hence it comes to paſſe, that many men ſeeing ſee not, and hearing heare not, & as who know the Scriptures, and yet neither know nor underſtand.

Therefore we confeſſe that the letters are a certaine image and figure of the word, yet they are not truely the very word, becauſe they are but onely an image and figure thereof.

This is the reaſon wherefore we admit no other word but what is anſwerable to this Image or Example of the Scriptures, and to the true and ſpirituall ſence.

Therefore the Scriptures are as the Index or golden Scales of the word, ſo they be underſtood not according to the dead letter, but according to the minde of Chriſt, and will of the Spirit.

Therefore wee reject not what is agreeable to the true meaning of the Scriptures, ſo we doe not deny what is not contrary unto them; For whoſoever is not againſt us is of us.

Therefore

Therefore we deny not the exterior word, written or ſpoken, ſo do we confirm the interior or living, ſo it is we grant the maiſtery and unction of the Spirit, and do not deny the gift of Prophecie and interpretation of the Scriptures.

For the word hath ſomething to come and ſomething obſcure and difficult to the fleſh. That which is to come, the Spirit taketh it of the word, and declareth it unto us, that which is obſcure and hard to be underſtood, it daily teacheth unto us, and leadeth us into all truth. Therefore under the name of the word of God, the letters are not onely underſtood, but al prophecies, viſions, dreams, unctions, inward ſpeakings, doctrines of the Spirit, & revelations if they be from God; alſo whatſoever holy men by the inſtinct of the ſpirit have either ſpoken or done.

Therefore no man muſt adhere peremptorily to the onely letter; where the holy Ghoſt is, there is libertie, and the free word is bound to none. Moreover, the holy Ghoſt ſuffereth no rule or limit to be prefixed to it in its own; therefore to nothing it is tyed but to it ſelf, that is, be

be not contrary and disagreeing to it self, as therefore many things come and are spoken from God; all which (nay not the thousand part) are written in the Scriptures; So many things at this day happen and are spoken by God, which are not written; And yet nevertheless they are the word of God, and wrought by him.

Add to which that many things there are not written, nor expressed in words, which we yet receive for the word of God, and onely by hand as it were, have received them from our Forefathers, of which kind are the abrogation of the precepts of the first counsell, renewed after by the holy Ghost to the Church; So as the Church was freed from the same: Of which things we notwithstanding have no written or expresse word.

Christ himself taught all in word, and writ nothing, and commanded his Apostles to preach, not to write.

And the Church is begotten rather by word then by writing.

Moreover, the Doctors & Preachers of the new Covenant were called and indeed are the ministers of the Spirit, not of the Letter. By

By all theſe it is manifeſt, that the free and ſwift Spirit is not tied unto letters, nor the doctrine of the Spirit can be included into the jayl, priſon and corner of the Scriptures.

Therefore although there be many books of the law, ſomething ſometimes may chance to come in handling of which there is no expreſſe Canon or Law to be found, but it is to be excogitated and ruled by reaſon.

So oftentimes ſuch a rare thing happeneth, the letters do univerſall forſake a man, that they cannot teach, comfort, guide, or appeaſe him; but a man muſt neceſſarily repair unto God, and conſult with the peculiar word of the Spirit by prayer, to comfort and ſtrengthen his weakned conſcience; For it is not ſufficient to have the common call and word, except a man have ſpeciall, proper, and inward call, which yet is not contrarie unto the common.

And although the word of God is altogether one, and undivided, yet how much thereof a man hath received by faith, ſo much of it is his; and this is his word. His iſſue the Word of God is, as God himſelf, muſt be made every ones by faith.

No

No otherwiſe then whereas the light of the Sunne is common; yet as much as every one is enlightned thereby, ſo much is the Sunne his, and no more: So as much as every one hath of God and his word, ſo far is he his God, and ſo far hath he God and his word, which are common to all, peculiar to himſelf.

Therefore the letters are far weaker then to ſatisfie a troubled conſcience in the offences thereof, and to make quiet again; the lively word of God muſt do this, and this honour hath God reſerved onely to himſelf, neither will he permit it to the letters, or any creatures whatſoever. Moreover, the holy Ghoſt will not be bound or captivated in thoſe that are his, nor be ſubject to the maſterie of any one, nor ſuffer that it ſhould be taught by any writing or mouth of man, but will it ſelf be the light, the Doctor, maſter, captain, and in a word, all in all things.

Moreover, he who uſeth the ſcriptures for a teſtimony of that work and ſpirit, ſo he do it according to the minde of Chriſt; not interpreting them according to the interpretation of the Scribes and Phariſees, doth onely uſe the Scriptures aright,

aright, according to the will of God, according as he ought; all others are meer abuſes, and the worſhip of images, as the whole world buſies it ſelf in the Scriptures, and eſteeme them to be their *Apollo*, as if the holy Ghoſt and God were no longer to be conſulted with, concerning any affairs, but onely the letters.

In a word, here they enquire and have all things; here with the Phariſees they think to have life; neither wil they grow by an other mans harm, nor will they ſee how blind, impious, ignorant, and dead they ever have been in all ages, in divine things, and in the word of God, who have been the moſt learned, and could all the Bible at their fingers ends, having for all that need to hear and learn the truth from Chriſt; So dark and deadly are the letters, which they make their idols.

*Paul* calleth the Letters death, but they life; but indeed they are eternall darkneſſe, death, ænigma, allegorie, and a ſealed book.

Unleſſe thou have the living Word of God unto the light, and in them relie upon the holy Ghoſt; For thy teacher, inſpirer, interpreter, guide, and maſter;

and

and yet many of them dare make the booke to be open, when as yet they cannot agree in the expesition of it. And from thence doe as many Sects and heresies arise, as Readers and Heads doe attempt to reade it.

But know thou, and have it as a thing most true, that they are cleane onely to the cleane, Spirituall to the Spirituall, the Word of God to them who are of God, and religiously studie them by the direction and guidance of the Holy Ghost, whom they carry alwayes with them, and put as a light into this, otherwise darke Lanthorne; so as by the doctrine of the Spirit and direction of it they bring more light unto them, then they receive therefrom; what they receive therefrom is nothing else, or no other but a certaine Testimony of the Spirit of them, and all Doctrine.

The *Bereans* used the Scriptures as *Christ* would have them to be used: (*Acts* 17.) *Search the Scriptures*, (saith he) *in which yee thinke yee have Eternall life*, *Joh.* 5. But he thinkes otherwise; For it followes, *they are they which testifie of me, that I am the Life and Word which speaketh unto you*, John 8.

As

As therefore we grant that the Scriptures are the rule of the Word & judge of ſpirituall things; So in no wiſe will we remove out of the Church, the word of God, and unction of the Spirit.

For even as we defend the Majeſtie and authoritie of the word of God againſt the dead Letter, ſo will we maintaine the maſterie of the Spirit againſt the executioner of the Letter.

And ſo we doe grant the fulfilling of the ſwift and ſhort word, as in the onely precept of love all is conteined, both the Law & Prophets be comprehended therein, we ingenuouſly confeſſe.

Wherefore as we doe not take away the word of the Law, but confirme it: So we doe thinke that ſomething is yet daily to be opened in the Church, by the unction of the Doctors therof; the ſigne and earneſt not of that which is neceſſary to ſalvation, but to the gift of Prophecying, and the hidden interpretation of the Scriptures.

Since Chriſt never forſaketh his Spouſe, but is alwayes preſent with her unto the end, *Matth.* 28 and being ever in the midſt of her, doth guide and direct her, 2 *Cor.* 9.

This is the reason wherefore wee doe not force or include the Majestie of the Word of God within the narrow prison of the Letters.

(∴)

FINIS.